

# Connecticut River 2020 Strategy

## PART TWO: Action Strategy for Riverfront Revitalization

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### REGIONAL STRATEGIES

AGAWAM

CHICOPEE

HOLYOKE

SOUTH HADLEY

SPRINGFIELD

WEST SPRINGFIELD





# CONNECTICUT RIVER 2020 STRATEGY

## Part Two: Action Strategy for Riverfront Revitalization

Prepared by  
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

June 1995

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COVER: Mayors Christopher Johnson (Agawam), Joseph Chessey (Chicopee) and Robert Markel (Springfield) lead the Springfield Cyclonauts on a bicycle tour of the Connecticut Riverfront.

SPRINGFIELD UNION staff photo by John Sucocki.

# Table of Contents

## INTRODUCTION

Purpose	1
Vision for the River	4

## REGIONAL RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION ACTION STRATEGY

Recommended Action Strategies	5
Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway	5
Connecticut River Clean-up	10
Connecticut River National Heritage Area	14
Silvio Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge	14
Connecticut River Channel Marking and Water Use Zoning	15

## AGAWAM RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION ACTION STRATEGY

Summary of Issues and Opportunities	17
Pynchon Point Park Revitalization	18
Preservation of Connecticut Riverfront Land and Public Access	18
Recommended Action Strategies	18
Pynchon Point Park Enhancements	18
Riverfront Recreation/Conservation Easements	18
Agawam Meadows Wildlife Refuge	20
Coty Conservation Area and Oxbow Hiking Trail	20

## CHICOPEE RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION ACTION STRATEGY

Summary of Issues and Opportunities	21
Access to the Connecticut Riverfront	22
Abandoned Rail Line along Chicopee River	22
Lack of Formalized Fishing Access to the Chicopee River off Granby Road	22
Opportunity for Protection of Riverfront Corridors Including City and Utility-owned Land along both the Chicopee and Connecticut Rivers	22
Opportunity for Connecticut RiverWalk on City Land and Other Private Land	22
Recommended Action Strategies	22
Chicopee Riverwalk & Bikeway	23
Granby Road/Chicopee River Fishing Access Area	23
Trails along the Connecticut River to Boat Ramp and South Hadley	23
Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway	23
Chicopee River Canoe Trail	23
Riverfront Conservation Easements	24
Chicopee River Wildlife Refuge	24





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## **HOLYOKE RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION ACTION STRATEGY**

Summary of Issues and Opportunities	27
Recommended Action Strategies	28
Log Pond Cove Wildlife Sanctuary	28
Holyoke Canalwalk	29
Holyoke Riverfront Park	29
Other Holyoke Riverfront Projects	29

## **SOUTH HADLEY RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION ACTION STRATEGY**

Summary of Issues and Opportunities	33
Recommended Action Strategies	34
South Hadley Falls to Chicopee Connecticut Riverfront Trail	34
Revitalization of Texon Mill and Associated Structures	34
Riverfront Zoning District	34
Other South Hadley Riverfront Projects	36

## **SPRINGFIELD RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION ACTION STRATEGY**

Summary of Issues and Opportunities	39
Recommended Action Strategies	42
Developing Springfield's Riverfront for Tourism with a Sports Theme	42
Private Sector Role in Riverfront Economic Development	43

## **WEST SPRINGFIELD RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION ACTION STRATEGY**

Summary of Issues and Opportunities	47
Recommended Action Strategies	48
Develop a West Springfield Riverfront Park	48

## **PROFILES OF SUCCESS STORIES FROM ACROSS THE UNITED STATES**

Introduction	51
Profiles of Waterfront Success Stories	52
Burlington, Vermont's Lake Champlain Waterfront Revitalization	52
Revitalization of the Tennessee Riverfront in Chattanooga, Tennessee	55
Recapturing the Riverfront in Hartford, Connecticut	55
Mississippi Riverfront Renaissance in Minneapolis, Minnesota	60
Summary of Common Denominators from Success Stories Across the Nation	63

## **APPENDICES**

<b>Appendix A.</b> Memorandum of Agreement for Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway Committee	65
<b>Appendix B.</b> Preliminary Design Graphics for Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway	73
<b>Appendix C.</b> Legislation for Western Massachusetts Environmental Trust	83
<b>Appendix D.</b> Model Zoning Bylaw for Connecticut Riverfront Development District	87
<b>Appendix E.</b> News Coverage of Connecticut Riverfront Projects	93





# Introduction



*Log Pond Cove - Holyoke*

## PURPOSE








This plan is intended as a companion to the CONNECTICUT RIVER 2020 STRATEGY (PVPC, 1993), which documented the river's problems, and described an overall vision for the river's future. This plan lays out a detailed, step-by-step implementation strategy for each of the major river revitalization projects envisioned in CONNECTICUT RIVER 2020 STRATEGY. Each document focuses on the lower, more heavily urbanized reach of the Connecticut River in

Agawam, Chicopee, Holyoke, Longmeadow, South Hadley, Springfield, and West Springfield.

The successful revitalization of the Connecticut River will require several key elements:

- a public-private partnership between businesses, communities, public agencies and civic groups, each playing a complimentary role in riverfront revitalization;

# RECOMMENDED RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION ACTION STRATEGY

-  Potential Resource
-  Existing Resource
-  Connecticut Riverwalk
-  Recreational Trail
-  Canoe Trail
-  Small Boat Access
-  Attraction

## TARGET AREAS & RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

### Recreation & Public Access Recommendations

- 10a Connecticut Riverwalk - Springfield, Chicopee, West Springfield, Longmeadow
- 10b Connecticut Riverwalk - Chicopee
- 10c Connecticut Riverwalk - Agawam
- 11 West Springfield Riverfront Park
- 12 Longmeadow Riverfront Park
- 13 Pynchon Point Park
- 14 Holyoke Riverfront Park
- 15a Westfield River Canoe Trail
- 15b Chicopee River Canoe Trail
- 15c South Hadley Canoe Trail
- 16 City Conservation Area
- 17 Connecticut River Oxbow Hiking Trail
- 18 Chicopee River Hiking Trail
- 19 Chicopee Riverfront Park/Access Area
- 20 Dean Vocational Schl. Small Boat Access
- 21 Springdale Park Access Area
- 22 Dinosaur Tracks Hiking Trail
- 23 Riverfront Bicycle Loop
- 24 Red Bridge Impoundment Hiking Trail
- 28 South Hadley Riverfront Park
- 29 Canoe Access Area
- 30 Beeches Fishing Access Area
- 31 Riverfront Park Linkages
- 32 Brightwood Area River Access
- 33 Westfield Riverwalk & Access Area

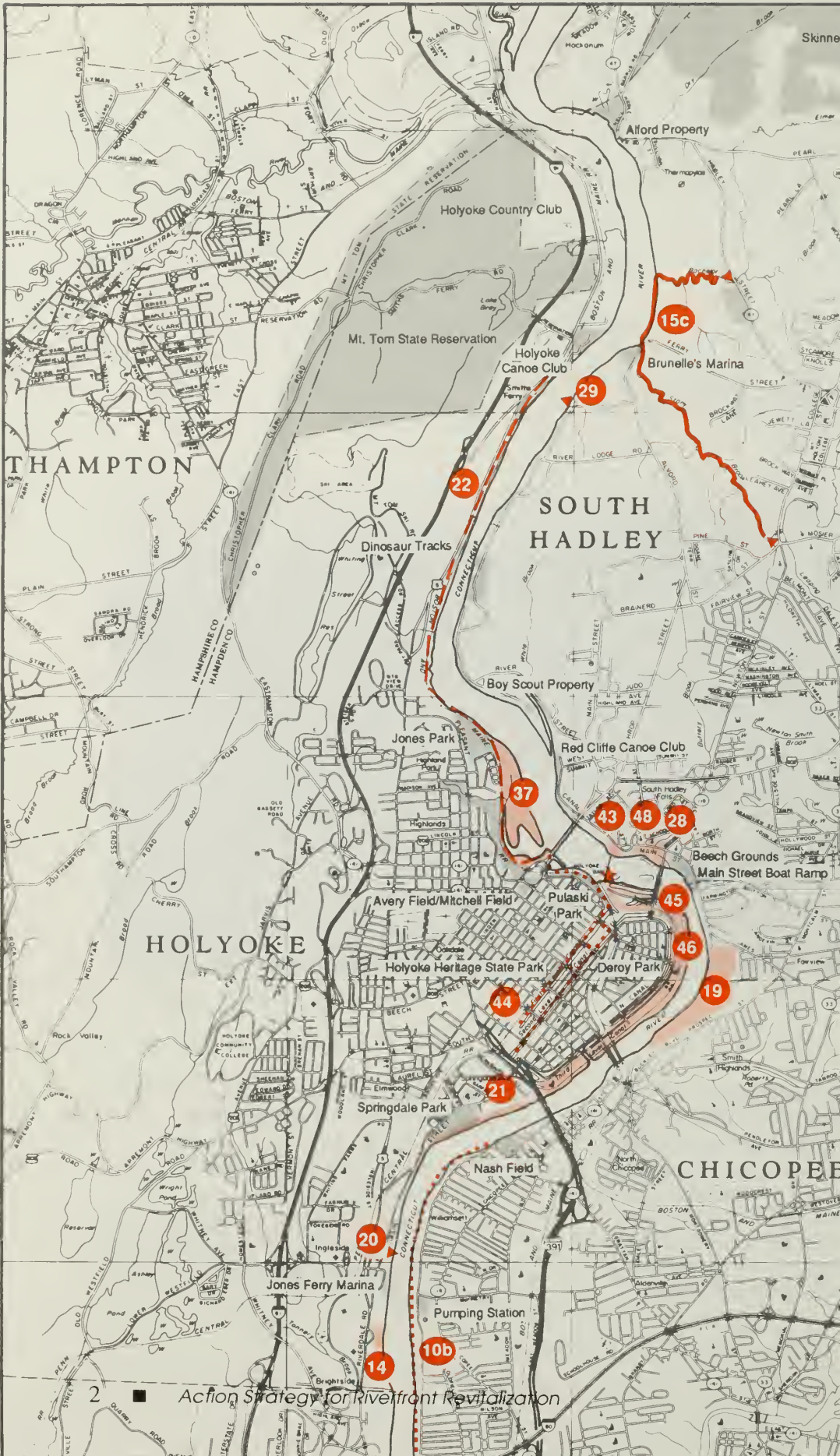
### Land Use & Environmental Quality Recommendations

- 36 Chicopee River Confluence Wildlife Area
- 37 Log Pond Cove Wildlife Area
- 38 Longmeadow/ Fannie Stebbins Wildlife Refuge
- 39 Westfield River Confluence Wildlife Area
- 40 Westfield River Fish Passageway
- 41 South Hadley Canal Memorial Park

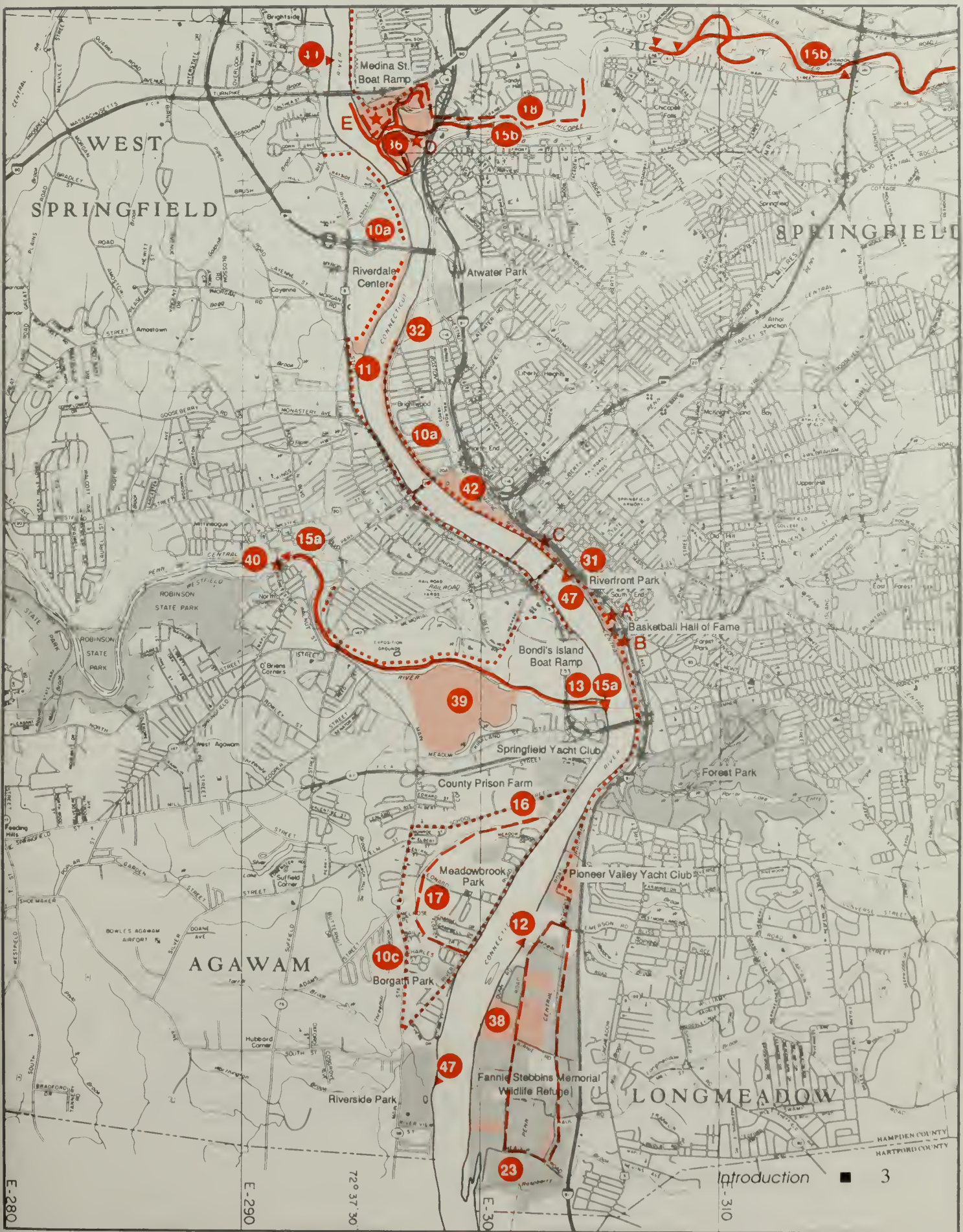
### Economic Development Recommendations

- 42 West Columbus Urban Renewal Plan
- 43 Texon Mill Renewal
- 44 Holyoke Canalwalk
- 45 Holyoke Fish Passage
- 46 Canal & Water Street Urban Renewal Area
- 47 Riverside Park Ferry
- 48 South Hadley Falls Urban Renewal Area
- 49 Marina Site

- A Potential Arts & Crafts Center
- B Potential Museum
- C Potential Freshwater Aquarium
- D Potential Environmental Education Center
- E Potential Artificial Wetland for CSO control
- F Potential Fish Ladder & Museum







- a commitment by municipalities to make river revitalization a top priority, and to devote needed financial and human resources to help implement these strategies;
  - creative grantsmanship and financing to provide the funds necessary for these projects;
  - a new level of regional cooperation between municipalities and other interest groups to break down parochial barriers, and maximize limited resources.
- 5) *Plan for attractive, well-designed riverfront land uses*, by adopting riverfront zoning and design regulations;
  - 6) *Educate people about the river's natural and cultural history*, by creating one or more environmental and historical education centers;
  - 7) *Promote cooperative action on river revitalization*, by developing a public-private partnership to implement strategies.

This plan is intended as a road map for municipal officials, riverfront landowners, businesses and others to revitalize a riverfront which will become a major part of the region's quality of life, economic vitality, and natural beauty. Even as this plan is being written, efforts are ongoing to implement portions of its recommendations.

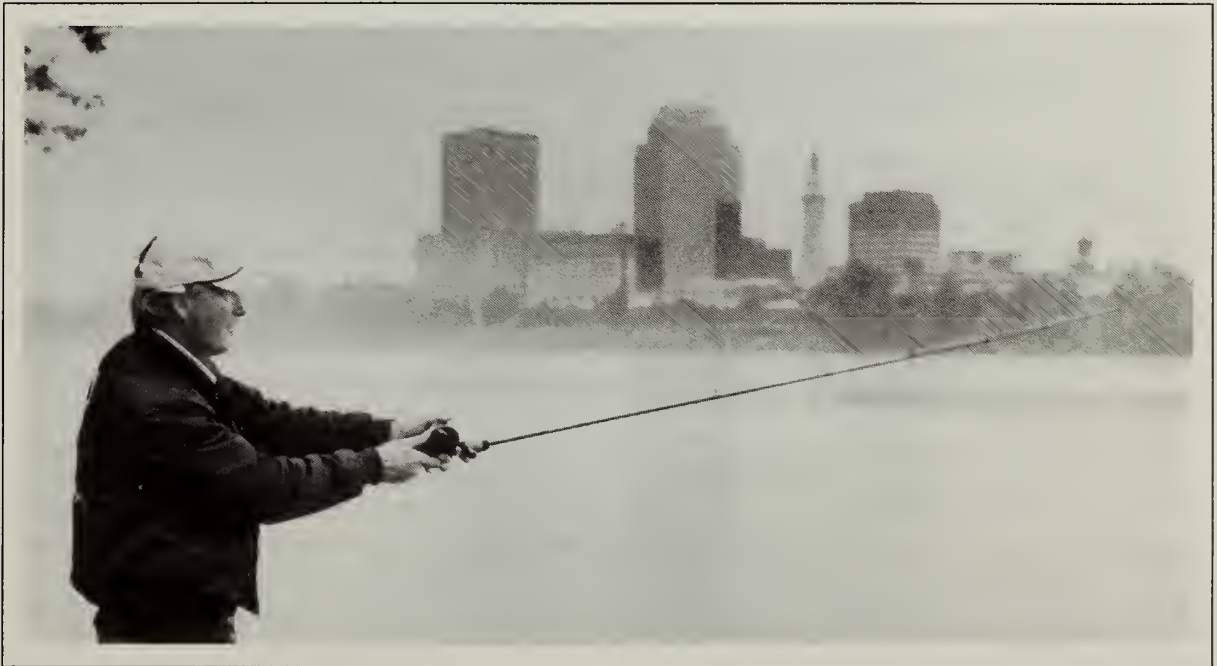
## VISION FOR THE RIVER

The Connecticut River is the Pioneer Valley region's premier natural asset, and the longest river in New England. THE CONNECTICUT RIVER 2020 STRATEGY presented a vision for the river's future, with clear running water, migrating salmon and shad, bicycle paths winding through wooded riverbanks, scores of boaters, waterskiers, and fishermen enjoying scenic views, tourists visiting riverfront museums and open-air restaurants, while corporate headquarters and condominiums share waterfront views. The key elements of this vision include:

- 1) *Restore fishable and swimmable water quality in the river*, by cleaning up combined sewer overflow problems;
- 2) *Bring people back to the river*, by promoting riverfront attractions such as museums, restaurants, retail shops, parks and trails, concerts and events;
- 3) *Restore fish and wildlife* and protect habitat areas and environmentally sensitive areas;
- 4) *Promote appropriate riverfront economic development* in older urbanized areas, through attracting tourism, adaptively reusing historic buildings, and encouraging river-oriented businesses and housing;



# Regional Riverfront Revitalization Action Strategy



Springfield Newspaper staff photo by Dave Roback

## RECOMMENDED ACTION STRATEGIES:

### Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway

The “Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway” is a proposed regional pedestrian and bicycle path along the banks of the Connecticut River, connecting the communities of Springfield, Chicopee, Agawam, West Springfield, and Longmeadow. The longest river in New England, the Connecticut River is the Pioneer Valley’s most prominent natural asset. For centuries it has been the source of regional identity and pride. But in recent times, residents have been

cut off from the river by highways, railroad tracks and flood control dikes. The Connecticut RiverWalk & Bikeway has been conceived to revitalize the Connecticut Riverfront, restoring it as a focus of life in the region.

The RiverWalk will create a linear park along both sides of the Connecticut River, and will feature:

- paved paths for bicycling, strolling, jogging, and rollerblading;
- scenic overlooks, a landscaped greenbelt, benches and picnic areas;

- urban promenades with vendor kiosks and public art;
- access to parks, nature trails, docks, beaches, and exercise and play spaces;
- safety and security features such as lighted segments and patrols.

The Connecticut RiverWalk will provide many needed benefits to a population of over 280,000 in the five participating communities alone and the entire region, including:

- reducing automobile traffic and emissions by offering opportunities to bike or walk to work, linking the region's urban core and employment center to suburban areas;
- dramatically increasing recreational access to the Connecticut River, making the special experience of riverfront recreation safe and inviting to all;
- stimulating riverfront revitalization in downtown Springfield and other areas, attracting tourist facilities, restaurants, shops and museums;
- providing opportunities for exercise and outdoor enjoyment in densely settled urban and suburban areas with no other similar facilities;
- establishing a key building block for creating an attractive and accessible urban greenbelt along the Connecticut River, linking new, planned riverfront parks, attractions, recreational facilities, and wildlife sanctuaries.

The total length of the proposed RiverWalk segments Agawam, Chicopee and Springfield is 10.7 miles. These segments would be constructed at an estimated cost ranging from approximately \$250,000 per mile in Agawam, Springfield and Chicopee (where there are few physical constraints to development) to approximately \$460,000 per mile for some segments in Springfield (where physical constraints are more significant). These costs do not include bridge connections over the South End or other bridges. Route extensions and bike lanes on streets in Agawam, West Springfield and Longmeadow would add another 12.1 miles to this regional facility, for a total length of 22.8 miles.

The Connecticut RiverWalk will be a regional facility, and consequently will be administered through a intergovernmental compact between the

communities of Agawam, Chicopee, Longmeadow, Springfield, and West Springfield, and involved public agencies, including Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC). This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) specifies the role of each participating community in owning and maintaining the various RiverWalk segments. The MOA has been approved by Springfield, Chicopee and Agawam to date. A copy of the MOA is included in this package. A Connecticut RiverWalk & Bikeway Committee, with appointed representatives from each community, will be established to oversee and guide the development of this facility. PVPC will take the lead role in administering the project.

The proposed project would be undertaken in multiple phases, over four or more years. The initial planning and preliminary design, was completed in 1994 by PVPC, in concert with a volunteer Connecticut RiverWalk Task Force. PVPC has also obtained a \$240,000 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) Enhancement grant from the Executive Office of Transportation Construction to undertake Phase One of the project. Phase One will include final engineering and design for two RiverWalk segments, a 2.1 mile segment in Agawam, and a 3.7 mile segment in Springfield. Phase One will also include a study to determine the feasibility, preferred route layouts, and estimated costs to connect the RiverWalk to Chicopee, West Springfield, and Longmeadow. Phase Two will include construction of the Agawam and Springfield segments, and final engineering/design for the Chicopee segment. Phases Three and Four will include construction of the Chicopee segment and final engineering/design for the most feasible of the route extensions to West Springfield and Longmeadow.

The Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway would be a paved pathway, at least 8 feet wide, designed for bicycle and pedestrian travel, along a landscaped greenbelt with continuous scenic views of the Connecticut River. Where land area permits, the pathway will include two 5-foot bicycle lanes, a 4-foot pedestrian lane, and two 3-foot shoulders, for a total width of 20 feet. As shown on the enclosed route maps, at full build-out, the complete Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway route will run the full length of the Connecticut River between Chicopee and Agawam, with segments on both sides of the river, and bridge crossings over the Connecticut and Chicopee Rivers.



## PHASED CONSTRUCTION OF CONNECTICUT RIVERWALK & BIKEWAY

Phase	Community	Segment or Task	Miles	Estimated Cost*	Status
Phase One	Agawam Springfield	Final Engineering and Design: Agawam (Chestnut Ln. to South End Bridge) and Springfield (So. End Bridge to Chicopee)	2.1 3.7	\$214,000	Underway in 1995
	Chicopee/W. Spfld./Longmd.	Feasibility Study: spur connecting routes	17.0	\$50,000	Underway in 1995
Phase Two	Agawam	Construction: River Rd., (So. End Bridge-Chestnut Ln.)	2.1	\$688,000	Design completed in 1978, update in 1995; land publically owned
	Springfield	Construction: Chicopee to South End Bridge	3.7	\$2,022,000	Design/engineering complete in 1995;
		Riverfront Park	.4	\$210,000	most land publically owned; easements for
		Handicap ramps over Amtrak	.1	\$900,000	other parcels
	Chicopee	Final Engineering and Design: Plainfield St. To Nash Field	4.9	\$254,000	Land partially in public ownership
Phase Three	Chicopee	Construction: Plainfield St. to Nash Field	4.9	\$1,345,300	Land partially in public ownership
	Agawam	Construction: Main, School St. and River Rd. Bikelanes	3.3	\$99,000	Location on Public R.O.W.
	Agawam - Springfield	South End Bridge Connector	.1	n.a.	MHD coordination required
	West Springfield	Final Engineering and Design: Riverdale Ctr. to Ashley Ave.	1.5	\$375,000	Most land in public ownership
	Longmeadow	Final engineering & design	n.a.	n.a.	---
Phase Four	Chicopee	Chicopee River Bridge	.1	\$580,000	Needs feasibility
	W. Springfield - Springfield	North End Bridge Connector	n.a.	n.a.	MHD coordination required
	West Springfield	Bikelane Construction: Elm, Park, Riverdale & Ashley Ave.	3.2	\$96,000	Location on Public R.O.W.
Optional Route Extensions	Agawam - West Springfield	Route 5 Bridge Connector	n.a.	n.a.	MHD coordination required
	West Springfield	North End Bridge to Bondi's Island	2.4	n.a.	Public land; steep slope constraints
	Longmeadow/ Springfield	South End Bridge to Emerson Road	1.7	n.a.	Requires bikelanes on public ways
	West Springfield/ Springfield	Memorial Bridge Connector	n.a.	n.a.	MHD coordination required

\* Construction costs @ \$250,000-460,000 per mile for bike/pedestrian path, and \$30,000 per mile for bikelanes along existing streets/roads.

In Chicopee, the route would begin on the north at the Nash Field recreation area and run south between the Connecticut River's east bank and flood control dikes to the Medina Street public boat ramp. From Medina Street, a new bicycle bridge over the Chicopee River would connect the route to the proposed wildlife sanctuary at Delta Park, with RiverWalk and bike lanes connecting this segment to Springfield at Plainfield Street, a total of 4.9 miles. In Springfield, the route would run along the river's east bank adjacent to flood control walls from Plainfield Street on the north to Riverfront Park, and then south to the South End Bridge, a total of 3.7 miles. A bridge connection over the South End Bridge would link this segment to the Agawam segment of the RiverWalk. In Agawam, the route would parallel the west river bank and River Road for 2.1 miles, with a loop route being completed via School and Main Street bike lanes, for a total of 5.4 miles.

Route extensions could connect the RiverWalk to West Springfield and Longmeadow. On the west side of the Connecticut River in West Springfield, the route would begin at Ashley Avenue north of the Riverdale Center shops and run south adjacent to flood control dikes to the proposed West Springfield Riverfront Park at Route 5. The route would then proceed via Riverdale Road or Park and Elm Streets to the North End Bridge, a total of 4.7 miles. A second West Springfield route extension along the river's west bank could connect the Agawam segment to West Springfield via the Route 5 Bridge, continue along Route 5 north past Bondi's Island to the North End Bridge, and connecting at that point to downtown Springfield, a total of 2.4 miles. The Longmeadow segment would run 1.7 miles adjacent to town roads in the "Meadows" section, connecting to the Springfield section via bikelanes on existing town roads.

There are numerous potential spur trails which could be developed and connected to the Connecticut RiverWalk to increase access and commuting options. These include:

- linkage to the potential new rail trail along Boston and Maine's Hazardville Line through downtown Springfield to East Longmeadow and Connecticut destinations;

- a spur trail in West Springfield connecting to the town center along Park Street and along the Westfield River flood control dikes;
- linkage to a potential new Chicopee Riverwalk rail trail along Boston and Maine's Chicopee River Line to Chicopee Falls;
- a spur trail in Springfield connecting to Forest Park and adjacent neighborhoods;
- continuing the Connecticut RiverWalk north to Holyoke, and linking to a potential Holyoke Canalwalk, and ultimately, to the existing Norwottuck Rail Trail.

For most of its length, the RiverWalk would run immediately adjacent to the flood control dikes or walls along the river, or on other publicly-owned riverfront land, with some segments connecting via bikelanes added to city streets or bridges. The flood control lands are owned by the municipalities, and managed in accordance with agreements with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Use of the flood control lands is subject to municipal approval of an amended management agreement, with review of the amendment by the USACE. Both groups have indicated a willingness to entertain management agreement amendments for the RiverWalk proposal, provided it does not damage or weaken the flood dikes. In Agawam, the RiverWalk would run along a strip of riverfront county-owned land. The Town of Agawam has received county approval for this project.

Bridge crossings over the Connecticut River and Chicopee River are planned to link segments of the RiverWalk. As part of planned Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD) reconstruction project for the South End Bridge, project proponents have requested that pedestrian and bicycle lanes, and ramps connecting to the RiverWalk, be added to this bridge. This would enable linking of the Springfield and Agawam segments of the RiverWalk. The cost of these lanes would be part of the MHD bridge projects. Preliminary discussions with MHD District 2 officials indicate support for the bike lanes on the bridge. A new pedestrian and bicycle bridge is proposed over the Chicopee River to link the Delta Park and Medina Street segments of the RiverWalk.

## CONNECTICUT RIVERWALK IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommended Action	Participant Organization(s)	Key Tasks/Milestone(s)	Funding Sources
<b>Secure land or easements for Riverwalk:</b> On privately-owned land, agreements must be secured to allow for site surveying and engineering, and recreational easements are needed for construction of the facility.	Municipalities PVPC	Contact landowners within corridor Develop short-term access agreement and long-term recreational easement Negotiate donation or sale of lands or easements	ISTEA Enhancement grants Municipalities
<b>Complete Engineering &amp; Design for Phase One:</b> For Springfield and Agawam segments, work with a selected engineering/design firm to develop detailed construction plans and cost estimates for segments totalling 5.8 miles	PVPC Springfield Agawam Connecticut Riverwalk Committee	Advertise and Select Consultant Site survey and evaluation Preliminary engineering and design Final engineering and design Preparation of bid documents and construction cost estimates Permitting and environmental compliance Public meetings	ISTEA Enhancement Grant with local match funds
<b>Complete Feasibility Study for Route Connections:</b> Work with a selected engineering/design firm to assess feasibility of linkage to Springfield segment.	PVPC Chicopee West Springfield Longmeadow Connecticut Riverwalk Committee	Determine feasibility of route connections Recommend route layouts Determine estimated costs	ISTEA Enhancement grant with local match funds
<b>Design &amp; Engineering for South End Bridge Connection</b>	Mass. Highway Department	(Same as #2 above)	Mass. Highway Department
<b>Develop Maintenance and Security Plan:</b> Identify key issues and create cooperative, long-term plan for Riverwalk maintenance and security	Connecticut Riverwalk Committee	Determine entity to undertake legal and contractual issues Determine entity(s) to own, maintain and provide security Create maintenance and security plan Secure municipal approvals under MGL Ch.40, section 4a	Municipal funds Volunteer groups Potential state or federal grants
<b>Complete Engineering/Design for Subsequent Phases:</b>	Chicopee West Springfield Longmeadow PVPC Conn. Riverwalk Committee	(Same as #2 above)	ISTEA Enhancement grant Municipalities State Transportation Bond
<b>Initiate Facility Construction in Phases</b>	Municipalities PVPC Mass. Highway Department	Secure necessary funding, local matches, permits Finalize design plans, bid specs Advertise and select vendor(s) Construction oversight and administration	ISTEA Enhancement grant Municipalities State Transportation Bond

## ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:

### 1) Develop Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway:

- Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway Task Force (CRBTF) formed in 1993;
- Planning, route layout and preliminary design completed by Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and CRBTF;
- Initial meetings with owners of land within proposed riverwalk right-of-way to gain their support for the project, and approval of easement donation in concept;
- Grant application for \$240,000 in ISTE A Enhancement grant funds for FY95 filed by PVPC on behalf of participating communities to complete design and engineering for Springfield and Agawam segments of riverwalk;
- ISTE A Enhancement grant for FY95 awarded in October, 1994 for engineering and design work, and consultant selection process initiated;
- ISTE A Enhancement grant applications for FY96 filed for construction of Springfield and Agawam segments of riverwalk for \$2,711,000, and for engineering/design of Chicopee segment for \$289,000;
- Press conference held by Mayors of Springfield, Agawam and Chicopee and PVPC to approve a new intergovernmental agreement to cooperate in the development of the riverwalk, and to announce the start-up of the project.

## Connecticut River Clean-up

Cleaning up the over 130 combined sewer overflows (CSOs) which still discharge raw sewage to the Connecticut River from seven communities in Massachusetts is the most formidable environmental task facing the region. However, it is also one of the most important. CSOs prevent the lower reach of the Connecticut River in Massachusetts from attaining Class B "fishable/swimmable" water quality standards. With each typical rainstorm, up to 59 million gallons of raw sewage are released into this reach of the river, making the water unsafe due primarily to elevated bacterial levels. Rainwater overloads the capacity of combined sewer pipes and sewage

treatment plants, resulting in the discharge of untreated sewage into the river.

In order to reach fishable/swimmable standards, 90 percent of the existing CSO discharges must be eliminated. In 1988, the LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOW STUDY was completed by Metcalf & Eddy, Inc., and it provided a blueprint for action to clean up the river. The study, completed at a cost of \$1 million, identified and analyzed 134 CSO outflow points in seven communities, and provided detailed recommendations for correction, including separating tributary sewer lines and building screening and disinfection facilities. The total estimated cost for clean-up was estimated at \$377 million

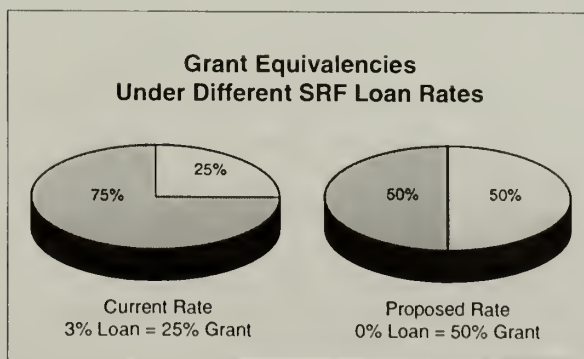
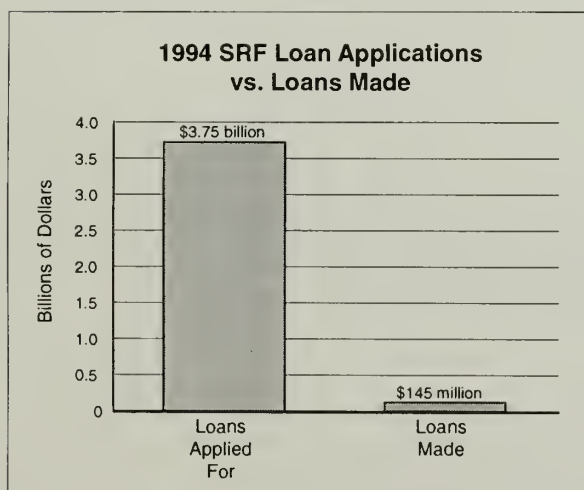
Community	Number of CSOs	Estimated Capital Costs
Agawam	14	\$2,691,000
Chicopee	39	\$181,000,000
Holyoke	20	\$60,374,000
Ludlow	10	\$6,960,200
South Hadley	11	\$3,904,000
Springfield	32	\$116,946,000
West Springfield	8	\$5,240,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>\$377,115,200</b>



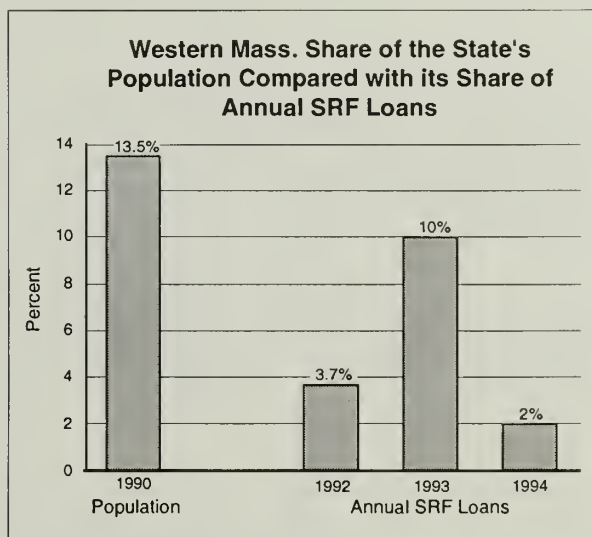
(adjusted to 1993 dollars). However, these costs can be reduced by making better use of available treatment plant capacity and by using new creative wastewater treatment technologies. Costs may also be made manageable by spreading them over a fifteen to twenty year timeframe.

Since the completion of the Metcalf & Eddy study, little progress has been made in implementing the study's recommendations. The reasons for this are manifold, and include:

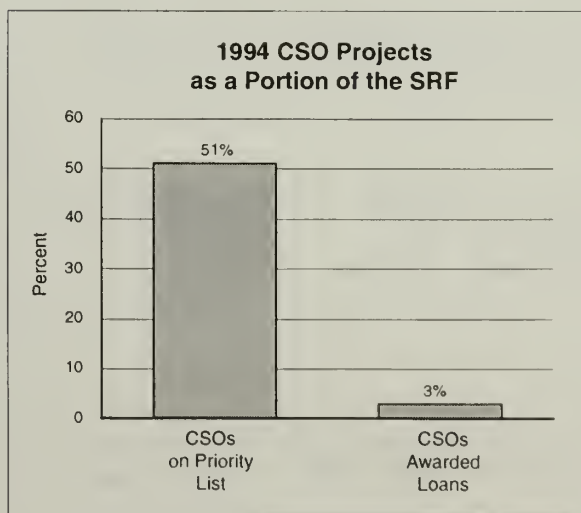
- 1) The recession and Proposition 2 1/2 limits left communities unable to fund CSO projects from local revenues;
- 2) Federal and state grant for wastewater treatment projects were discontinued, and replaced by a State Revolving Fund (SRF) providing low-interest loans, which is the only significant source of funding now available;
- 3) The SRF in Massachusetts is underfunded by over \$3.6 billion. In 1994, the SRF was able to fund only 4% of the statewide need for wastewater projects;



- 4) The SRF offers insufficient incentives, even with available loan subsidies, for communities to be able to afford needed projects;
- 5) There is an inequitable allotment of SRF funds in Massachusetts, and western Massachusetts does not receive its proportional share relative to Boston and other areas of the state. In 1994, for example, Boston-area communities received \$82 million in SRF funds, while the four western Massachusetts counties received only \$3.5 million;



- 6) CSO projects are at a competitive disadvantage in the SRF program. In 1994, over half the wastewater project funding need was for CSO projects, yet only 3 percent of the loans were made for CSO correction.



## CONNECTICUT RIVER CLEAN-UP IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommended Action	Participant Organization(s)	Key Components of Law	Funding Sources
<b>STATE LEGISLATION</b>			
<b>Support State Legislation to Enhance the State Revolving Fund (SRF)</b>	State Legislators Communities PVPC	Provide \$15 million as state match to federal Clean Water Act funds  Reduce interest rate on SRF loans to 0%, the equivalent of a 50% subsidy	State Legislature
<b>Provide State Funds for Innovative CSO Solutions</b>	State Legislators Communities PVPC	Create a funding category, possibly within the Open Space Bond, for environmental education and improvement projects  Fund Chicopee constructed wetland CSO demonstration project	State Legislature
<b>Amend SRF to establish a funding floor for western Massachusetts, and to increase priority for CSOs</b>	State Legislators Communities PVPC	Establish a regional floor or funding set-aside for western Massachusetts within the SRF, similar to State Transportation Bond  Increase the level of priority given to CSO projects under the SRF.	State Legislature
<b>Create a new "Western Massachusetts Environmental Trust"</b>	State Legislators Communities PVPC	Similar to the Massachusetts Environmental Trust which serves the eastern part of the state, the Western Mass. Environmental Trust should receive an appropriation of seed money from the General Fund. Other sources of funds could include pollution fines and penalties derived from environmental lawsuits; environmental license plates sold in western Mass. and private contributions, such as bank affinity checking programs. Funds received from pollution fines should be expended for pollution control projects in the same geographic area as the pollution incident which cause the fine.	State Legislature
<b>Establish a Check-off Box for Tax Returns for Contributions to Clean-up</b>	State Legislators Communities PVPC	Voluntary contributions to the Connecticut River clean-up project could be established on state income tax returns. Alternatively, enabling legislation could give communities the option to accept contributions as part of the local property tax collection process.	State Legislature
<b>Develop Enabling Legislation for Stormwater Utilities</b>	State Legislators Communities PVPC	Stormwater utilities can be created at local or regional level to collect fees from owners based on the amount of paved area on their property. Pavement produces stormwater runoff, which contributes to the CSO problem. Fees would be used for correcting CSO and stormwater problems.	State Legislature
<b>Develop Legislation for Property Transfer Fees</b>	State Legislators Communities PVPC	Enabling legislation would provide a local option to add a transfer fee to real estate transactions. The fees would be dedicated to Connecticut River clean-up.	State Legislature



## CONNECTICUT RIVER CLEAN-UP IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommended Action	Participant Organization(s)	Key Components of Law	Funding Sources
<b>FEDERAL LEGISLATION</b>			
<b>Create a New Grant Program with the Clean Water Act for Innovative CSO Solutions</b>	Federal Legislators Communities PVPC	Amend the Clean Water Act to create a new program of federal grants for innovative approaches to CSO control. In 1994 and 1995, Representatives Olver and Neal filed bills to provide \$100 million annually to fund up to 80% of the projects which demonstrate the feasibility of innovative or alternative technologies to address CSO problems.  Build an interstate coalition to support and work for the passage of this bill and state revolving loan funds.	Federal Legislature
<b>Increase funding for State Revolving Loan Funds</b>	Federal Legislators Communities PVPC	As part of the federal Clean Water Act reauthorization, increase federal funding levels for State Revolving Loan Funds, and extend the program until at least the year 2000. Reduce interest rates, and provide partial grants for hardship communities which meet economic criteria.	Federal Legislature

### ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:

#### 1) Creation of Connecticut River Clean-up Committee:

The communities of Springfield, Chicopee, Agawam, South Hadley, Holyoke, Ludlow and West Springfield and PVPC approved an intergovernmental compact, agreeing to cooperate in efforts to clean up the river, to lobby for increased state and federal financial assistance, and to form a standing committee to work on the clean-up effort;

#### 2) Legislative Forum:

In January 1995, PVPC coordinated a special forum for area legislators to brief them on Connecticut River clean-up funding issues, and to suggest the need for new legislation to address funding shortfalls;

#### 3) Federal Legislation for Connecticut River Clean-up:

A bill to amend the federal Clean Water Act by creating a new grant program to fund innovative approaches to CSO control was drafted by PVPC and filed by Representative Olver, with Representative Neal;

#### 4) State Legislation for Connecticut River Clean-up:

A bill to create a new Western Massachusetts Environmental Trust was drafted by PVPC, in cooperation with state legislators;

During 1995, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will be issuing administrative orders to all seven Connecticut River communities, with a required schedule for abatement of CSOs. Cities and towns must play a major role in funding these mandates, but should not have to go it alone. State and federal assistance will be critical in the river clean-up effort. The following section describes recommended state and federal legislative strategies and grant opportunities that should be implemented to benefit the region.

### Connecticut River National Heritage Area

In 1994, Congressman John Olver sponsored federal legislation to initiate a National Park Service study of the Connecticut River and its special combination of natural and historical features, to determine the feasibility of creating a National Heritage area, trail or similar entity. Such a National Heritage area or trail could link together key historical sites, conservation or recreational access areas, and points of interest along the Connecticut River. An interpretive trail guide and educational exhibits could direct

visitors to a linked series of sites along and near the river. Examples of sites that could be included are: the Springfield Armory, Basketball Hall of Fame, Holyoke canal complex, Holyoke fish ladder, South Hadley historic canal, Cabotville mills in Chicopee, Chicopee River wildlife refuge and constructed wetland, and so on. The region should support this project, which holds great opportunities for helping to protect historic and environmental sites, but also to promote the Connecticut River corridor as an important and interesting tourist destination which enhances the local economy.

### Silvio Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

In 1995, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) released its Environmental Impact Report on the proposed Conte National Wildlife Refuge. The recommended plan of action in the Environmental Impact Review (EIR) proposes that a total of 76,185 acres of land be protected over 15 years by state or local agencies and private organizations using Challenge Cost Share grants, and 25,680 acres by the

## CONNECTICUT RIVER HERITAGE AREA IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommended Action	Participant Organization(s)	Key Milestone(s)	Funding Sources
<b>Complete NPS study of potential heritage area</b>	National Park Service PVPC	Identify key natural and historical features Assess feasibility of heritage area or trail	National Park Service
<b>Implement recommendations of NPS study</b>	National Park Service PVPC Municipalities	Prioritize projects Develop detailed plans/designs Seek municipal and Congressional support	National Park Service Municipalities

#### ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:

##### 1) Connecticut River Heritage Study:

Congressman John Olver sponsored successful legislation to provide funding for completing a study of the Connecticut River corridor and heritage area.

USFWS. Most of this land would be protected using conservation easements. The recommended plan also proposes that two new environmental education centers be created, in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. As part of the environmental education program, the USFWS would use its Challenge Cost Share grant program to fund 120 new access related facilities, 120 new interpretive facilities, and 60 site improvements at existing facilities.

The Silvio Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge would present an excellent opportunity for the region to benefit from these proposed new programs and facilities. The region's communities and groups should support the proposed refuge plan, and participate actively in its programs.

## Connecticut River Channel Marking and Water Use Zoning

In addition to water quality problems, one of the major obstacles to increased boating activity on the lower Connecticut River in Massachusetts is difficulty of navigating larger craft in the meandering channel of the river, with its many sandbars and shallows. The lower Connecticut River communities and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management should develop a channel marking program, similar to programs on other reaches of the river, to better delineate channels which are safe for larger craft. Also, in anticipation of an increase in boat use of the river, a water use zoning plan should be developed to designate sections of the river reserved for power boat use and for non-power boat use (i.e. canoes and sailboats).

### CONTE REFUGE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommended Action	Participant Organization(s)	Key Milestone(s)	Funding Sources
Support USFWS recommended plan of action for Conte Refuge	Municipalities PVPC	Support EIR recommendations (Alternative D)	Congressional appropriation
Seek USFWS environmental education center location in Pioneer Valley	Municipalities PVPC	Identify priority location (i.e. Chicopee River confluence or Springfield riverfront) Seek Congressional support	USFWS funds
Seek Challenge Cost Share funds for land protection	Municipalities PVPC Land trusts Conservation nonprofits	Identify eligible areas (i.e. Agawam Meadows, Chicopee River confluence, Log Pond Cove, Fannie Stebbins area) Develop local support coalitions to assist in projects	USFWS Challenge Cost Share grants
Seek Challenge Cost Share grants for environmental education projects	Municipalities PVPC Conservation nonprofits Schools, museums	Identify projects (i.e. Chicopee constructed wetland, Log Pond Cove) Develop local coalitions to assist in projects	USFWS Challenge Cost Share grants

#### ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:

##### 1) Environmental Impact Report for Conte Refuge:

In June, 1995, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released its EIR on the Conte Refuge, and PVPC prepared comments on the draft plan.





# Agawam Riverfront Revitalization Action Strategy



*Pynchon Point Park - Agawam*

## **SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Agawam is located at the confluence of the Connecticut River and, a major tributary, the Westfield River. The presence of two significant rivers in Agawam may have been the impetus for the first colonial settlement in the Pioneer Valley in 1635. The town began as an agricultural community and later became more urbanized. Agawam is now a largely suburban community with some remaining agricultural areas.

Agawam's Connecticut River frontage includes approximately 1.8 miles of county-owned open land with a rest area, and the town owns a 3.5 acre parcel at the confluence of the Westfield and Connecticut Rivers called Pynchon Point Park. The town also has significant Westfield River frontage which includes ownership of a small parcel of land right across from the town hall and middle school, and to the west it is bordered by Robinson State Park.

The following sections describe issues and opportunities for riverfront revitalization in Agawam.

### **Pyncheon Point Park Revitalization**

Of the town's riverfront areas, Pyncheon Point Park has the most need for revitalization efforts. It is a 3.5-acre, mostly wooded area, which juts out into the confluence of the Westfield and Connecticut Rivers. It is adjacent to state-owned property at the west side of the South End bridge (Route 5). Pyncheon Point Park currently functions as an informal small boat access area.

Pyncheon Point Park is natural and scenic at the water's edge, but the section adjacent to River Road contains an old parking area in poor repair with Jersey barriers barricading the entrance to the park. Access to the river for small boats is limited by the barriers and the inadequate parking area. In addition, an adjacent unscreened industrial area detracts from the park's natural character. These unattractive elements and obstacles prevent residents and visitors from appreciating Pyncheon Point Park's beauty. Signage is needed that informs potential park users that the area is a park and small boat access.

An action plan for this site must address the issues outlined above including cleanup of the site, beautification of the entrance to the park, and adequate parking facilities.

### **Preservation of Connecticut Riverfront Land and Public Access**

In order to complete development of Agawam's segment of the Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway, and to protect the remaining undeveloped sections of the riverfront, Agawam should negotiate a voluntary donation of conservation easement for properties in this area. Hampden County owns a long section of land (approximately 1.8 miles) along River Road, adjacent to the Connecticut River. The southern boundary of this property begins approximately across from Redwood Drive and continues north to a point across from School Street. The proposed Riverwalk route would traverse this entire 1.8-mile property. Easements need to be formalized allowing the Riverwalk to be on this property.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION STRATEGIES**

### **Pyncheon Point Park Enhancements**

The Pyncheon Point Park area was targeted as a riverfront site with potential for revitalization by Agawam in its current open space plan, and the CONNECTICUT RIVER 2020 STRATEGY. The park should be improved by attention to several of its small but significant components and by the following actions:

- removal of Jersey barriers at the entrance and addition of a more attractive fence or wall;
- addition of picnic facilities, trails, and landscaping;
- reconfiguration of the parking, including a landscaped island;
- screening of any unattractive abutting areas;
- improvement of a limited access for small boats;
- addition of a descriptive sign at the entrance;
- work with private property owner on west side of park to install fence and screening for trailers and trucking business.

Upgrading Pyncheon Point Park benefits the town's residents as well as visitors from throughout the region. The park may eventually be connected to the Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway.

The town of Agawam's Planning Department, Conservation Commission, and Engineering Department and a local volunteer, along with PVPC, have developed a potential site plan for a revitalized Pyncheon Point Park. There has been some interest on the part of the Westfield River Watershed Association, the Connecticut River Watershed Council, International Paper, and the Conservation Commission to participate in a work day. Many of the materials needed for the project may be available from local suppliers and they should be solicited by participants involved in the project.

### **Riverfront Recreation/Conservation Easements**

In 1994, PVPC and participating communities submitted a proposal for ISTEAs Enhancement funds to finance the design and engineering of the Agawam and Springfield segments of the Connecticut



## AGAWAM RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommended Actions	Participant Organization(s)	Key Tasks/Milestone(s)	Estimated Costs/ Funding Sources
<b>Clean Up and Improve Pynchon Point Park</b> Pynchon Point Park needs a coordinated effort to clean up, improve and reconstruct the area. Several organizations are willing to participate in the park's revitalization.	Agawam Engineering Dept. Agawam Planning Dept. Agawam Conservation Commission PVPC Westfield River Watershed Association Connecticut River Watershed Council MHD	Create site plan of existing facilities Establish dimensions and specs for: Parking area Island for parking area Fence/guardrail Picnic area Trails Screening of abutting areas Contact potential contributors of materials or equipment Establish agreement between town and MHD regarding MHD removal of Jersey barriers and compatible use of adjacent MHD land. Contact civic and environmental groups to volunteer for work day Coordinate work day to: Remove pavement Grade new parking area Add island to parking area Clean up area - pick up trash Construct wall/guardrail Plant flowers/plants/trees Trail blazing	Cost estimate unavailable  Agawam EOCD via PVPC MHD In-kind contributions International Paper
<b>Obtain riverfront recreational easement on Hampden County land</b> This easement on county land along a 1.8 mile segment of River Road, is necessary for the development of the Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway, and for the long-term protection of the riverfront.	Agawam Planning Hampden County Commissioners PVPC Trustees of the "Plan for Progress"	Trustees of Plan for Progress and PVPC meet with County Commissioners to seek approval of RiverWalk conceptual plans and easement donation. Develop short-term access agreement for site surveying, engineering Develop permanent conservation easement agreement Seek formal vote of approval from County Commissioners Record easement agreements	Cost estimate unavailable  Voluntary donation of easement to city
<b>Agawam Meadows Wildlife Refuge</b>	City of Agawam Mass. DEM U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Meet with landowners to discuss long-term protection plans Seek funding for land acquisition Create long-term management plan for area	Cost estimate unavailable  City of Agawam Mass. DEM U.S. F&WS
<b>Coty Conservation Area and Oxbow Nature Trail</b>	City of Agawam	Meet with landowners to discuss long-term protection plans Seek funding for land acquisition Create long-term management plan for area	Cost estimate unavailable  City of Agawam U.S. F&WS

RiverWalk. At that time, the Hampden County Commissioners submitted a letter of support for the project, and indicated their willingness to work cooperatively on the project. In order to allow PVPC and Agawam to proceed with design, engineering and construction of the project, Hampden County should donate easements to the City of Agawam for the route right-of-way for the RiverWalk.

### **Agawam Meadows Wildlife Area**

The City of Agawam should work with the Department of Environmental Management and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect the 250 acres of

prime wildlife habitat at the confluence of the Westfield and Connecticut Rivers, possibly as part of the Conte National Wildlife Refuge, or a Connecticut River state park.

### **Coty Conservation Area and Oxbow Hiking Trail**

The City of Agawam should pursue protection of the former Coty property off School Street as a town conservation area. The city should also pursue development of a Connecticut River oxbow hiking and nature trail linking this property to the former oxbow of the Connecticut River.

#### **ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:**

##### **1) Improvements to Pynchon Point Park:**

- Meetings with representatives from Agawam Planning Department, Conservation Commission and PVPC to plan park improvements.
- Current site plans created by Agawam Engineering Department.
- Draft conceptual plan developed by volunteer architect.
- Discussions with Westfield River Watershed Association, Connecticut River Watershed Council, International Paper, and other volunteers to solicit involvement in work day and improvements to the park. These groups have indicated interest in working on the project.

# Chicopee Riverfront Revitalization Action Strategy



*Chicopee River Fishing Access Area - Chicopee*

## **SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Chicopee is a small city with several distinct centers, including Willimansett, Chicopee Falls, and Chicopee Center located along the eastern bank of the Connecticut River. The Chicopee River flows westerly through the city to its confluence with the Connecticut River.

Chicopee has historically developed around an agricultural and manufacturing-based economy. Throughout the 1600s, agriculture was dominant in Chicopee. During the 1800s, it became possible to

create power from the waters of the Chicopee River and mill complexes such as the current Cabotville Industrial Park and Ames Manufacturing Company were developed taking advantage of the water power. Once known as Willimansett, the areas of Chicopee Center and Chicopee Falls, just inland of the Connecticut River, became centers of industry, housing and commerce.

Chicopee has been actively working to protect the Chicopee and Connecticut Rivers from further degradation and to increase public access to the rivers

for appreciation and awareness building. Projects such as the confluence conservation area, efforts to mitigate combined sewer overflow, and participation in the development of the Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway attest to the city's efforts. However, more work is needed to open the rivers up to the public. The following sections describe issues and opportunities for riverfront revitalization in Chicopee.

### **Access to the Connecticut Riverfront**

Chicopee currently has very little public access to the Connecticut River. Along the northern and central portions of the Connecticut riverfront in Chicopee, there is open land owned by the Public Access Board, Northeast Utilities and the city of Chicopee which abuts primarily residential areas. It is fortunate that the riverfront in this section escaped development of a major roadway and has a dike which can serve as a route for cyclists and pedestrians. The Connecticut River dike runs continuously from Nash Field, a city park, south to the confluence of the Connecticut and Chicopee Rivers. The city-owned land along the dike is a beautiful natural environment with many possibilities for outdoor enjoyment, biking, walking and wildlife viewing. It has been targeted to become a major component of the Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway, described previously.

### **Abandoned Rail Line along Chicopee River**

The abandoned B&M rail line located on the southern bank of the Chicopee River has potential for being an easily accessible recreation and travel route. This old rail right-of-way can potentially connect Chicopee Falls and other neighborhoods with Chicopee Center, and create a linkage between the Connecticut River and Chicopee's major park — Szot Park. The city owns portions of the route and would need to purchase or obtain easements for other sections that are currently privately-owned.

### **Lack of Formalized Fishing Access to the Chicopee River off Granby Road**

The area along the northern bank of the Chicopee River, across from city hall and the above-mentioned

route for a Chicopee Riverwalk and Bikeway, is a popular location for shad fishing, but it does not have adequate parking available for all of the fishing enthusiasts who congregate there in shad season. The creation of adequate parking, picnic facilities, and access to the fishing site itself would greatly enhance that area.

### **Opportunity for Protection of Riverfront Corridors Including City and Utility-Owned Land along both the Chicopee and Connecticut Rivers**

The segment of Chicopee-owned riverfront along the Connecticut River adjacent to the South Hadley border is a potential link between the two communities and a possible conduit for the Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway. There are many possible trail loops that could be developed by removing obstacles or creating links between the trail that exists and neighboring city streets or the utility corridors. Efforts should be made to develop these trails.

### **Opportunity for Connecticut RiverWalk on City Land and Other Private Land**

There is an opportunity to link the Connecticut RiverWalk across the Chicopee River, perhaps via a new pedestrian and bicycle bridge, and south to the city of Springfield's flood control dike system. This linkage would need to be made along a rail line or as bike lanes on city streets.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION STRATEGIES**

There are several potential revitalization sites along both the Connecticut and Chicopee Rivers. One significant project area is the abandoned B & M rail right-of-way along the Chicopee River. The city of Chicopee owns a fishing area on the northern bank of the Chicopee River along Granby Road, and also owns riverfront property on the eastern bank of the Connecticut River close to the South Hadley border.



## **Chicopee Riverwalk and Bikeway**

The Chicopee Riverwalk and Bikeway would be a great addition to the community for recreation, river access, commuting, access to several centers in the city, and river protection. There is a possible route beginning at the Depot and Front Street intersection where the proposed Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway would connect. The route continues easterly along Front Street down to the abandoned B & M rail line along the Chicopee River to the Chicopee Industrial Park. There it would veer off the rail line to the city-owned flood control dike and continue easterly to Oak Street where it would exit via an easement to the street. Several access points along the route are possible and should be established by easements with property owners. The potential riverwalk and bikeway route connects the proposed Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway route to Chicopee's major park — Szot Park. In addition, it creates an alternative travel route through the City of Chicopee.

## **Granby Road/Chicopee River Fishing Access Area**

A popular fishing spot is located on the northern bank of the Chicopee River on city-owned land off of Granby Road. There should be better pedestrian access, parking and picnic facilities for this location given its popularity and proximity to the downtown and residential areas. Massachusetts Highway Department has plans to reconstruct Granby Road. MHD and the city of Chicopee Engineering Department should work together to integrate these additional elements into the reconstruction plans.

## **Trails along the Connecticut River to Boat Ramp and South Hadley (potentially a joint project with South Hadley)**

There is a strong possibility for connecting trails between Chicopee and South Hadley along the Connecticut River. In the short-term, the trail would start near Nash Field and continue up the river to South Hadley Falls. There are remnants of an old road from the last century which has grown over with vegetation, but allows for a foot trail for quite a distance. A portion of the land is owned by North-

east Utilities but may be available for an easement, other portions are city-owned. A boat ramp just below the South Hadley border in Chicopee is owned by the Public Access Board and managed by Department of Environmental Management (DEM). The footpath would connect to this boat ramp area. The Public Access Board may be willing to assist in some trail development on their property. There are potential loop trails from the South Hadley water treatment plant (located in Chicopee) up to the power line corridors and to neighborhoods adjacent to the river.

In South Hadley Falls, the trail would connect to the town center via a ramp/stair and through the South Hadley Falls recreational field across the street from the town hall. The trail could also continue to the South Hadley canal just above the Route 116 bridge. Several properties along the trail's route would need easements.

In the long-term, it may be possible to convert the trail to an extension of the Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway.

## **The Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway**

Chicopee is also an opportune location for a portion of the Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway. Chicopee should actively pursue implementation of its segment of this regional facility. As described previously, the route would begin at the Springfield-Chicopee city line and travel north to the confluence of the Chicopee and Connecticut Rivers. After crossing the Chicopee River, the route should travel north along the city's dike system to Nash Park. There may be potential for continuing the route north to South Hadley as outlined above.

## **Chicopee River Canoe Trail**

This trail should be established in two segments, through the cooperative efforts of the city and the Chicopee River Watershed Council. The first segment would begin at a put-in area in Ludlow, and continue downstream to take-out points either at the I-291 access area or the Taylor Street access area in Chicopee. The second segment includes the entire Chicopee River confluence area, which can be accessed from the Medina Street boat ramp.

## Riverfront Conservation Easements

The city should actively pursue with Northeast Utilities the potential for donation of lands or easements for unused utility land at two riverfront locations: along the Chicopee River near its confluence with the Connecticut River; and along the Connecticut River near the South Hadley town line. These areas would provide opportunities for river access, passive recreation, and wildlife habitat preservation in the heart of an urban area.

## Chicopee River Wildlife Refuge

The city should actively pursue protection of the 150-acre land parcel at the confluence of the Chicopee River and Connecticut River, and its inclusion in the Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge.

### CHICOPEE RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommended Actions	Participant Organization(s)	Key Tasks/Milestone(s)	Estimated Costs/ Funding Sources
<b>Establish a Chicopee Riverwalk and Bikeway along the Chicopee River</b> A riverwalk and bikeway should be established from the Connecticut RiverWalk through the city of Chicopee along the Chicopee River to Szot Park. Portions of the riverwalk route are owned by private entities and it is necessary for the city to acquire parcels or create easement agreements with property owners to develop this amenity for the city and region.	Chicopee Chicopee River Watershed Council (ChicRWC) Pioneer Valley Planning Commission	Conduct a site assessment of the potential route and access points. Develop conceptual plans for proposed route including property ownership, access points and distances. Develop presentation package for property owners and ISTE and other grant applications. Secure land or easements for riverwalk and bikeway. Develop Local Support for: Present proposal to city boards, meet with civic organizations Obtain letters of support Create flyers and other informational materials Secure funding for design and engineering plans Secure all necessary permits from local, state and federal governments Secure funding for construction of the Riverwalk and Bikeway Develop long-term maintenance and security plan	\$1,000,000  Chicopee EOCD via PVPC In-kind ChicRWC Urban Self-Help funds Self-Help funds ISTE Enhancements Local match funds
<b>Improved Granby Road Fishing Access and Facilities</b> The Granby Road fishing area located on city-owned property should be made more accessible and should have an established parking area. Picnic facilities would also improve the site.	Chicopee PVPC MHD	Conduct site assessment to determine best location for parking area, picnic facilities and better access areas at the site Develop a design and layout proposal to submit to MHD Request that MHD incorporate proposed changes into plans	Cost estimate unavailable  Chicopee MHD EOCD via PVPC



## REVITALIZATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommended Actions	Participant Organization(s)	Key Tasks/Milestone(s)	Estimated Costs/ Funding Sources
<b>Chicopee/South Hadley Connecticut Riverfront Trail</b> There are existing trails and other potential sites for development of loop trails and access to the Connecticut riverfront in Chicopee and South Hadley. A joint effort should be made to connect trails from Chicopee to the DEM managed boat ramp at the city-town boundary and north to South Hadley Falls.	Chicopee South Hadley PVPC Northeast Utilities	<b>Short-Term Actions:</b> Conduct a site assessment to determine the potential route and access points and loops Develop a conceptual design of route with access points and other elements that are needed Secure funds for construction of trail and amenities <b>Long-Term Actions:</b> Connect trail to Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway and make continuous from Nash Field in Chicopee to South Hadley Falls	Cost estimate unavailable  Chicopee Public Access Board Northeast Utilities
<b>Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway</b> Provide more access to the Connecticut riverfront for residents and visitors. Funding should be secured to develop the Chicopee segment.	Chicopee PVPC Task Force	Apply for funds to develop design and engineering plans for the project Negotiate easements with landowners whose properties the route would cross Apply for funding and manage the construction process.	\$289,000 for design and engineering  ISTE Enhancement funds Local match
<b>Riverfront Conservation Easements</b> The city and Chicopee River Watershed Council should pursue the donation of lands or easements for unused utility lands along the Chicopee and Connecticut Rivers.	Chicopee River Watershed Council Chicopee Northeast Utilities PVPC	Meet with Northesst Utilities to discuss Formalize conservation easements	No direct cost
<b>Chicopee River Canoe Trail</b> Increase public access to the Chicopee River through the development of a system of access sites for canoes and other small boats.	Chicopee Chicopee River Watershed Council	Establish conceptual plan with access sites Secure funding and develop access sites	Cost estimate unavailable  Chapter 60b Waterways Improvement funds
<b>River Wildlife Refuge</b> Pursue establishment of a wildlife refuge for the 150-acre area at the Chicopee River confluence with the Connecticut River, possibly as part of the Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge	Chicopee U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Develop plan for protection and improvements, including hiking trails, small boat access and passive recreation facilities  Seck funds and formal designation through Conte Refuge	No cost estimate available  City of Chicopee U.S. F&WS

## **ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:**

### **1) Development of a Chicopee Riverwalk and Bikeway**

- Planning group established to oversee riverwalk and bikeway development.
- Conceptual designs completed.
- ISTEA Enhancements grant application submitted jointly by City of Chicopee, Chicopee River Watershed Council and PVPC for design and engineering funding.
- Urban Self-Help and Self-Help grant applications submitted by Chicopee for purchase of key parcels in route.
- Negotiations in progress with private property owners for purchase or easement of key parcels.
- Informational brochure being produced.

### **2) Improvements to the Granby Road Fishing Access**

- Review of MHD engineering plans underway.
- Negotiations between Chicopee and MHD underway.

### **3) Development of a Chicopee to South Hadley Connecticut Riverfront Trail**

- Planning group established to oversee the development of the joint riverfront trail.
- Site assessments underway.
- Conceptual designs partially complete.

### **4) Development of the Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway**

- (see regional action strategy)
- Feasibility study to be undertaken in 1995 on Chicopee segment.
- ISTEA Enhancements grant application for FY96 funds submitted by City of Chicopee for engineering and design.

# Holyoke Riverfront Revitalization Action Strategy



*Proposed Site, Holyoke Canalwalk - Holyoke*

## SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Holyoke is known as the nation's first planned industrial city, developed along a network of canals that provided water from the Connecticut River to turbines providing hydroelectric power in each of the city's many historic mills.

Many historic mills still line the riverfront and canals are prominent in the city. Holyoke's downtown center and several residential areas are located uphill of the mills and industrial areas along the river. Some of these structures along the riverfront could be

revitalized bringing life back into this part of the city.

Several locations along the riverfront in Holyoke are existing parks or potential recreation areas that could be connected to the downtown and to each other, creating more access to the riverfront. This would greatly enhance quality of life in this densely populated city and contribute to riverfront revitalization. Currently, existing parks such as Prospect Park are underutilized and have been cut off from access to the river and its scenery. Most of the obstacles are overgrown trees and shrubs and awkwardly placed

fences or developments. Walkways and viewsheds to the riverfront could be possible by tree trimming and formalizing already used pathways.

An interesting riverfront location, which is just north of the central city but within walking distance of many city residents, is referred to as Log Pond Cove. This river cove, marsh, and floodplain forest has been suggested for some level of development for public use and a wildlife sanctuary. This area has been studied several times over the past 30 years in hopes that it could be made more accessible and safe for the public's benefit. The major obstacle is the B&M railroad tracks which lie in-between Log Pond Cove and the potential access sites. If this obstacle were overcome, Log Pond Cove would be a great asset to the community. Another route to Log Pond Cove is a trail/walkway called a canalwalk, that would link the existing Heritage State Park at the first level canal in the city to other city parks and would eventually lead to Log Pond Cove.

A major impediment for both the canalwalk and Log Pond Cove is the ownership of critical parcels or access locations. Northeast Utilities owns the Log Pond Cove parcel and the canals. B&M railroad still owns and operates the rail line which runs along the riverfront from the canals and past Log Pond Cove. Ownership, access and public use issues need to be negotiated between the property owners, conservation groups and the city for Holyoke's successful riverfront revitalization.

## RECOMMENDED ACTION STRATEGIES

The city of Holyoke has several opportune areas for riverfront revitalization. An important part of the revitalization effort is making connections between the existing open or recreational areas and creating new ways to access and appreciate the Connecticut River.

### Log Pond Cove Wildlife Sanctuary:

An area with great potential for an urban wildlife sanctuary is Log Pond Cove. This is a 65-acre area along the western bank of the Connecticut River just north of Holyoke's center. The land area is owned by Northeast Utilities. The cove has distinct environ-

ments, including a wetlands or "marsh-like" area adjacent to a shallow lagoon, which is slowly filling in with vegetation, and a large forest and meadow floodplain area. Log Pond Cove can be easily seen by passersby over the Mueller Bridge (Route 202), from Jones Point Park, or from Hampden Street. It is currently used informally by residents in the area for swimming, camping, nature viewing, walking, motor-biking, and other activities. Many are worried about safety considerations and the impact current use has on some sensitive wildlife species in the cove.

Several plans have been created for Log Pond Cove since the 1960s. These plans have ranged from passive nature paths in a wildlife sanctuary setting to a full-scale youth camp. Components to plans have included a nature walk along a boardwalk through the "marsh-like" area in the cove, a bridge over the B&M railroad tracks which separate the cove from potential access points, picnic structures, a pavilion, a bandshell, athletic fields, and sanitary facilities. The consensus over the years seems to be that Log Pond Cove is a valued community resource and would be even more of an asset to the community, and the region, if it could be made safe and accessible to the public, and if some public facilities were added.

An ad hoc group came together in the first part of 1995 to try to determine the best elements of plans for the site, and ways in which to fund the different elements. Immediately, there were two issues that were of major concern — future ownership and the expense which would be borne by creating access over the railroad tracks — which has discontinued other plans in the past. Aside from those issues, many participants recommended a passive recreation/conservation easement plan. This plan would include use of existing paths throughout most of the 65-acre area, and installation of interpretive signs at the entrances of the area showing trail routes and some of the natural and historic features one may observe within.

The following implementation plan would use some elements of existing plans and suggestions made by the ad hoc committee. This implementation plan recommends that the city or a private non-profit conservation organization work with state and federal resource agencies (i.e., MA Department of Environmental Management, MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and



Wildlife Service) to require that Northeast Utilities donate the property to the city or a private non-profit conservation organization as part of its draft and final FERC license. Along with the donation of the property, several amenities should be added including an access bridge over the railroad tracks, entrance signage, gates, and trail markers for existing trails.

## **Holyoke Canalwalk**

The city of Holyoke hosts an extensive system of canals which have been part of the hydroelectric power producing history of the city. In addition, the city has some attractive parks, such as Prospect Park and the Heritage State Park, which are within walking distance of each other and many other of Holyoke's current and future features.

The area adjacent to the first level of the canals should be developed into a walkway which would lead from the existing Heritage Park through Holyoke Water Power Park, Prospect Park and Pulaski Park to a potential conservation area at Log Pond Cove. The potential walkway would be paved with bricks, lighted with antique fixtures and landscaped with intermittent benches and access points to other attractions such as the Children's Museum, possible revitalized mill buildings, the center of Holyoke, and finally Log Pond Cove. A series of markers should be placed in appropriate locations to describe historically significant features along the route, and direct people to other nearby attractions.

Although major portions of the walkway are publicly-owned, a part of the walkway is owned by Holyoke Water Power Company/Northeast Utilities. To implement the project, a joint-use or easement agreement would have to be arranged. The following implementation plan recommends having the city request from Northeast Utilities, as part of its draft and final FERC license, donation of an easement or a negotiated joint-use of the first canal area for a walkway.

The implementation plan also recommends that the city negotiate with the B&M Railroad Company to establish a joint-use agreement for the portion of the route owned by B&M Railroad.

## **Holyoke Riverfront Park**

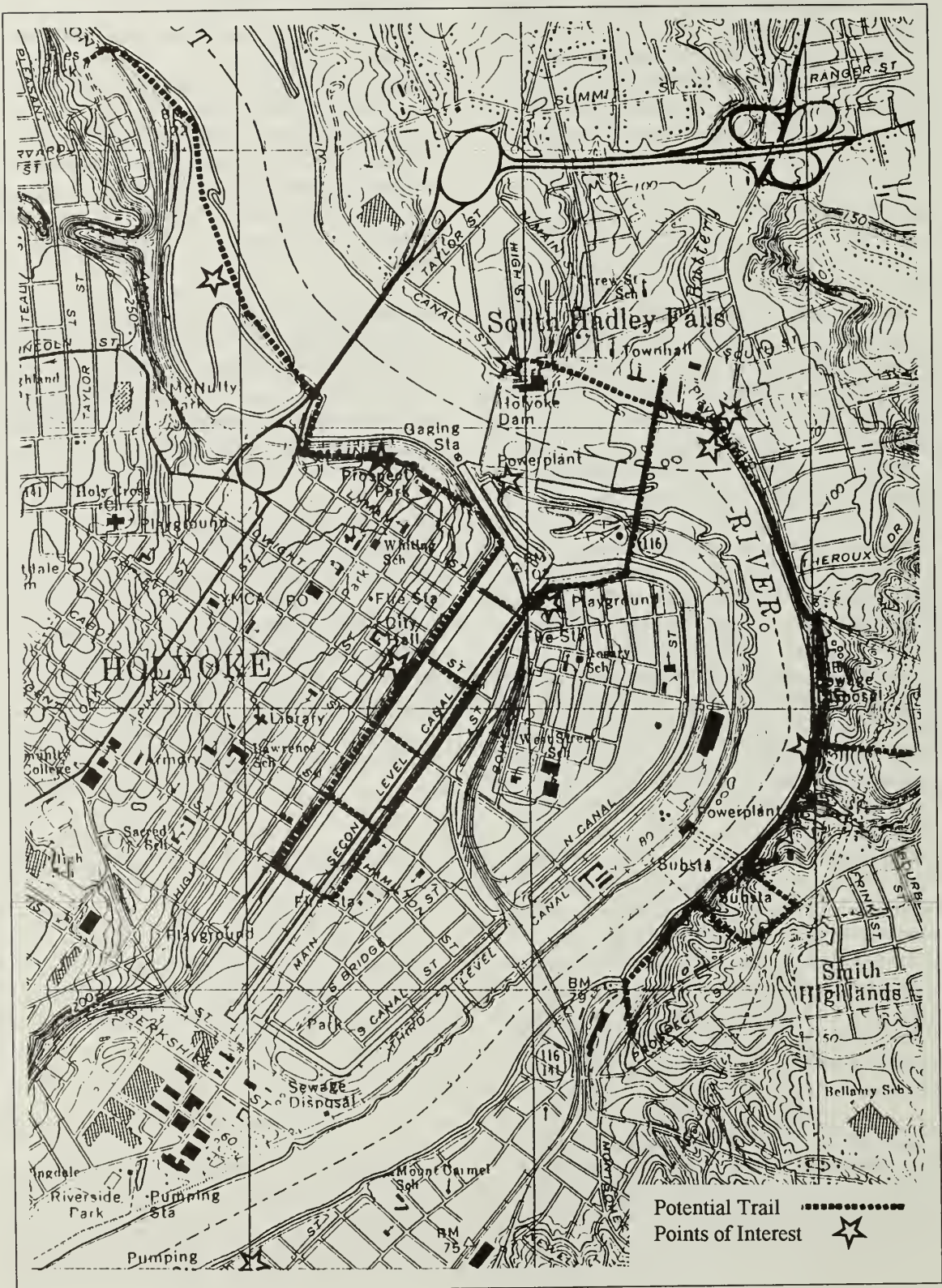
Holyoke has an opportunity to create a riverfront park that would allow access to the river and provide open areas for recreation. There is an open field across from Providence Hospital between the western bank of the Connecticut River and Route 5 in the southern section of Holyoke that has great potential for a riverfront park. The park could include several playing fields, a small boat access to the river, and a parking area. The parcel of land is owned by the Sisters of Providence.

As a part of the implementation plan, it is recommended that the city of Holyoke continue to negotiate with the Sisters of Providence to arrange for a donation or bargain sale of the land for the purposes of a needed city park in exchange for a rezoning of land that the Sisters have wanted.

## **Other Holyoke Riverfront Projects**

Other projects which the city should pursue include the Springdale Park river access area on the Connecticut River; improvements to promote increased tourism at the Holyoke Fish Passageway; and development of a Dinosaur Track Hiking Trail, as described below.

Potential Trail in Chicopee and South Hadley connecting to the Holyoke Canalwalk





## HOLYOKE RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommended Actions	Participant Organization(s)	Key Tasks/Milestone(s)	Cost Estimate/ Funding Sources
<b>Create Increased Public Access to and Protection of Log Pond Cove Wildlife Area</b> The Log Pond Cove wildlife area should be protected by a conservation restriction with some allowance for light public access and passive recreation opportunities. The property is currently used by the public as a conservation area with passive recreation. This conservation restriction would make the current uses permanent and would prevent development of the site in the future.	Holyoke PVPC Greater Holyoke Youth Camping Inc. Citizen Volunteers US Fish and Wildlife Service MA DEM MA DFW National Park Service Non-Profit Conservation Groups Northeast Utilities	Develop strong local support of creating a Log Pond Cove Wildlife Area by establishing a broad-based local planning group to oversee future actions Identify an organization or agency that would be willing to hold conservation restriction by initiating discussions with DEM, DFW, US F&W, NPS, and non-profit conservation groups Establish Conservation Restriction on the Property under one of the following scenarios: <i>Option One:</i> Work with state and federal resource agencies (i.e., DEM, DFW, U.S. F&W, NPS) during the Holyoke Dam relicensing process to strongly request the current owner, Northeast Utilities, to place a conservation restriction allowing passive recreation in the deed, as part of its draft and final FERC license. <i>Option Two:</i> Request that Northeast Utilities give the city or a non-profit conservation organization an option to purchase the property with a conservation easement or restriction allowing passive recreation in the deed. Develop safe public access points to Log Pond Cove including an access over the B&M railroad tracks Install bulletin/map boards at entrances and install trail markers Establish use and maintenance agreements	Cost estimate unavailable In-kind volunteer support EOCD via PVPC Holyoke Northeast Utilities
<b>Holyoke Riverfront Park</b> Holyoke should continue to work with the Sisters of Providence to develop the riverfront property in front of Providence Hospital into a city park with small boat access.	Holyoke Sisters of Providence Hospital PVPC	Secure an Easement or Acquisition of the Property Develop a Conceptual Design of the Site Secure Design/Engineering Plans of the Site Secure Construction of the Project Develop Maintenance and Use Plan	Cost estimate unavailable Holyoke Sisters of Providence Urban Self-Help/ Land and Water Conservation Fund

Recommended Actions	Participant Organization(s)	Key Tasks/Milestone(s)	Cost Estimate/ Funding Sources
<b>Establish a Holyoke Canalwalk</b> The canals present a great opportunity for an attraction as well as a connection between significant areas within Holyoke. Canalwalks should be developed along at least the first level canal leading to other attractions such as Prospect Park, DEM Heritage State Park, and Log Pond Cove.	Holyoke Northeast Utilities Private sponsors DEM Heritage Park B&M Railroad	Develop a conceptual design to begin planning process Identify property ownership and secure easement agreements Develop design and engineering plans for the Canalwalk Secure construction of the Canalwalk Develop a long-term maintenance and security plan	Cost estimate unavailable  Holyoke Northeast Utilities ISTEA Urban Self-Help Private sponsors In-kind contributions DEM Heritage Park
<b>Springdale Park Access Area</b>	US Army Corps of Engineers Holyoke	Investigate potential connections from the park to riverfront, such as a walkway along flood control dikes	MA DFW Greenways Grant
<b>Holyoke Fish Passage</b>	Northeast Utilities	Investigate potential for expanded fish passageway facilities to attract tourism, similar to Washington's Bonneville Dam facility	Northeast Utilities
<b>Dinosaur Track Hiking Trail</b>	DEM Holyoke MHD PVPC	Explore the potential for a hiking trail linking the dinosaur tracks public access area along Route 5 to Ferry Street	DEM Greenways Grant In-kind services from B&M Railroad ISTEA Enhancement funds

#### ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:

##### 1) Creation of a Log Pond Cove Wildlife Area:

- An ad hoc planning group has been established in Holyoke to recommend plans and oversee future actions at Log Pond Cove Wildlife area.
- Discussions have been initiated with the group and property owner Northeast Utilities regarding NU's plans for the area.
- Requests for conservation restriction and other elements are being developed to send to Northeast Utilities during the Holyoke Dam relicensing.

##### 2) Development of a Holyoke Canalwalk:

- An ad hoc planning group has begun plans for the Holyoke Canalwalk.

##### 3) Development of a Holyoke Riverfront Park:

- Discussions were initiated between the City of Holyoke and the Sisters of Providence regarding the riverfront parcel in front of Providence Hospital.



# South Hadley Riverfront Revitalization Action Strategy



*Shad fishing at Beech Grounds - South Hadley*

## **SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

South Hadley is a town with two villages of distinctly different character. South Hadley Falls has an industrial heritage which was made possible by the proximity of the historic South Hadley canal and the Holyoke Dam. Mount Holyoke College has been a strong influence in South Hadley Center, with a more classic New England college-town setting of shops and homes.

Along the northern riverfront, there is a great deal of open land and less commercial or industrial develop-

ment. Few vistas of the river remain except through some of the pastures and from homes that sit up the slope from the riverfront. Along the southern part of South Hadley's riverfront, in South Hadley Falls, there is compact industrial-style development right up to the river's edge. South Hadley Falls still has some old mills, including the so-called "Texon Mill," which is a prominent landmark directly on the riverfront.

Major issues confronting South Hadley include protection of the remaining open riverfront lands in the northern part of town, as well as reinvigorating

the village in South Hadley Falls. South Hadley has a lot of river frontage not apparent to passersby. Providing enhanced public access to the riverfront for appreciation by residents and visitors should be a priority. In addition, the many potential trails and historic amenities along the riverfront should be enhanced and made more accessible and visible. These local attributes will benefit the community in both scenic and natural aspects, and are likely to improve the local economy and quality of life.

## RECOMMENDED ACTION STRATEGIES

South Hadley's riverfront could be a great asset to the town, providing a focus for economic development and recreation in South Hadley Falls and an attractive area of open space and wildlife habitat in the northern part of town. In the southern part of town, where the Connecticut River flows past the historic South Hadley Canal and over the Holyoke Dam, many possible enhancements could link the village of South Hadley Falls to the river, and also stimulate interest in the village for increased economic development, as described below.

### South Hadley Falls to Chicopee Connecticut Riverfront Trail

The riverfront from South Hadley Falls south to Chicopee has great potential for walking and mountain biking trails, as well connections to an existing small boat ramp. There are several sections of the riverfront which, with some amount of cleaning up and structuring, could be turned into pleasant trails and beaches. These could connect to interesting attractions such as the canal, the Beech Grounds, the recreation area across from town hall and the shops and other businesses in South Hadley Falls.

The Beech Grounds should be improved for better, safer public access, fishing, swimming, picnicking, and hiking, including the following elements:

- creation of a grassy landscaped slope from the parking lot to the water's edge, to replace the riprap and artificial fill currently in place;
- development of a riverfront picnic area and fishing pier;
- establishment of an annual river clean-up day and on-going park maintenance;

- improvements to signage for both the park and trail system; and,
- creation of an improved trail system, with appropriate landscaping and trash barrels.

The long-range vision would be to connect this trail system to the Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway. For the short-term, segments would be worked on as possible funding from a variety of sources is secured. There are several possible funding sources including Northeast Utilities which owns a segment of the potential trail area. Other funders might include the Urban Self-Help, Self-Help programs or the DEM Greenways Program.

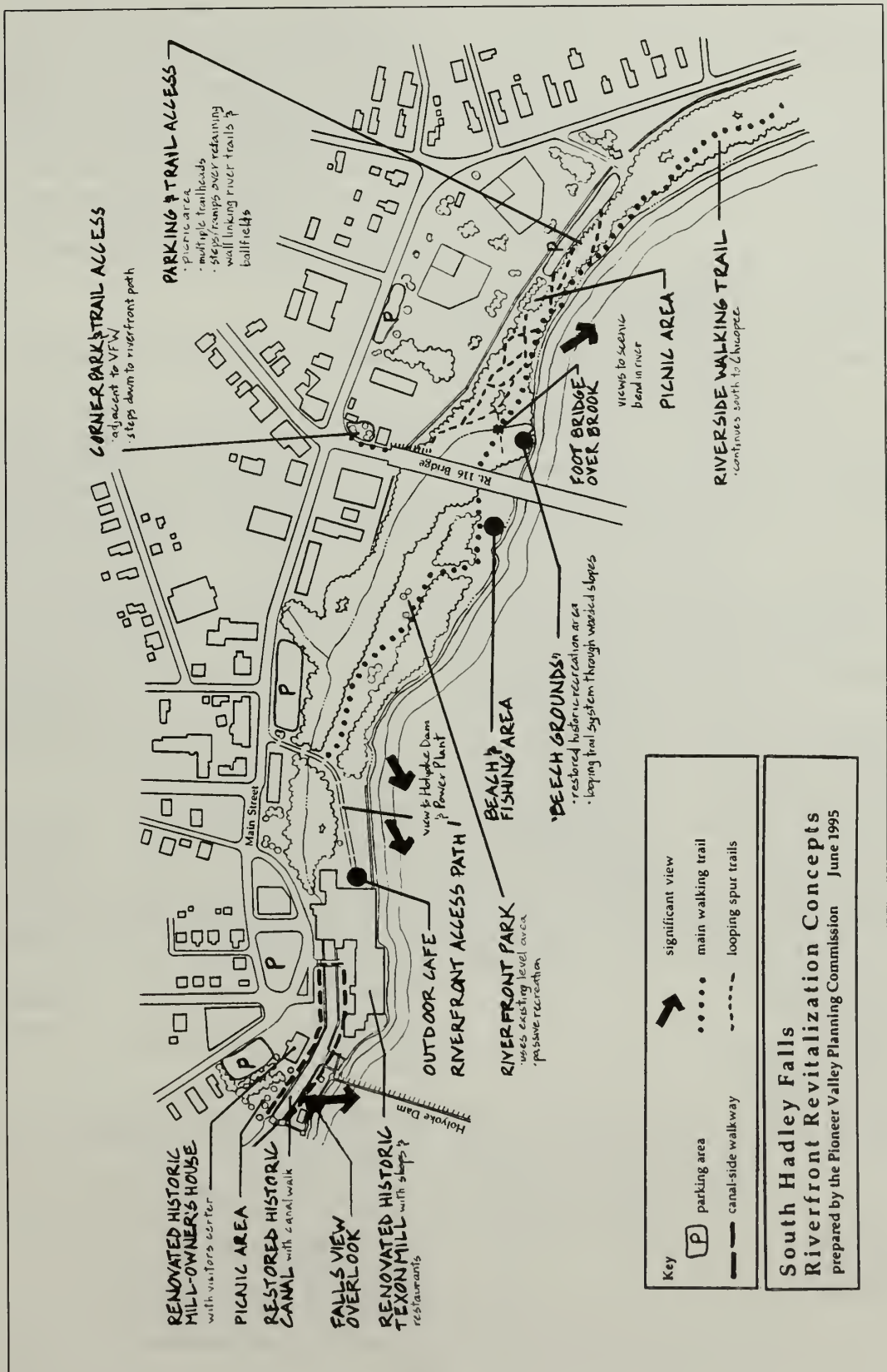
### Revitalization of the Texon Mill and Associated Structures

South Hadley Falls is fortunate to have several of its old mills in some productive use. The Texon Mill and several buildings just outside its gates are owned by Northeast Utilities and are prime locations for revitalization given that they sit on the riverfront with views up to the Holyoke Dam. One or more of the structures outside the Texon Mill gate should be demolished to allow a park or picnic area to be built right in view of the dam. The Texon Mill itself is a historic structure with untapped potential. It is located right in the village and it has a vantage point like no other on the Connecticut River for views up and down the river.

The recommended strategy for these buildings is to request that in its Holyoke Dam relicensing, Northeast Utilities sell or lease them to appropriate owners or tenants for renewal or demolition. The town or a private developer should improve the structures and work to fill them with uses such as restaurants, shops, offices and possibly a museum showcasing the old machinery and workings of an old mill. This property would also integrate with the South Hadley to Chicopee Connecticut Riverfront Trail described above.

### Riverfront Zoning District

Zoning is a land use tool that can effectively change future development, and the future character of an area. Opportunities exist for two types of riverfront





zones in South Hadley; a Connecticut Riverfront Development Incentive District and a Connecticut Riverfront Protection District.

A South Hadley Connecticut Riverfront Development Incentive District should be implemented to encourage water dependent, tourism or other uses that would attract people to the river. Conditions would be established, through development incentives, to require public benefits, such as access to the riverfront, require public amenities, such as benches or picnic areas, establish design criteria, and set environmental performance standards for new development in the district. Greater densities and other incentives would be allowed if these conditions were met. A Riverfront Development Incentive District, which would include the Texon Mill property, would complement existing land uses in the Falls area and could enhance much needed and ongoing economic revitalization efforts in the area.

A South Hadley Riverfront Protection District, applying only to new development not existing development, would allow single family homes to be built along the river but require them to be setback from the river, similar to a setback from a roadway or neighboring property line. Environmental performance standards would also be established to protect water quality. This district would begin approximately north of the Mueller Bridge along the Connecticut River to the South Hadley/Hadley town boundary.

### Other South Hadley Riverfront Projects

Other projects which the Town of South Hadley should pursue include the development of a small boat access area off Alvord Street, and the development of a South Hadley Riverfront Park near the Route 116 bridge in South Hadley Falls, as described below.

## SOUTH HADLEY RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommended Actions	Participant Organization(s)	Key Tasks/Milestone(s)	Estimated Cost/ Funding Sources
<b>Development of a South Hadley to Chicopee Connecticut Riverfront Trail</b> To increase public access and appreciation of the Connecticut riverfront, efforts should be made to create a walking and mountain biking trail from South Hadley Falls south to Chicopee on existing informally used trails and riverfront areas. Improvements to the Beaches area and other potential attractions would greatly increase safety and would bring people back to the riverfront.	Chicopee South Hadley PVPC South Hadley Falls-Revitalization Committee	Coordination with Chicopee on development of the Riverfront Trail Conduct a site assessment and determine potential route for trail and assess needs for enhancements at Beaches area Develop a conceptual plan and design for a trail from the gatehouse above the Texon Mill and canal down to the village center on to the Beaches area and then connecting to Chicopee and the Main Street boat ramp Determine possible access sites, foot bridges, and locations for kiosks or signs Develop public awareness and support by meeting with civic groups and distributing informational materials Coordinate plan with Recreation Dept. and other town boards Secure funding for Design and Engineering Plans Secure funding for Construction of the Project Develop a Long-term Maintenance Plan	Cost estimate unavailable South Hadley EOCD via PVPC Chicopee Public Access Board Urban Self-Help/Self Help Land and Water Conservation Fund Private contributions



<b>Recommended Actions</b>	<b>Participant Organization(s)</b>	<b>Key Tasks/Milestone(s)</b>	<b>Estimated Cost/ Funding Sources</b>
<b>Revitalization of Texon Mill and Associated Structures</b>	South Hadley South Hadley Falls Revitalization Committee Private Developer Northeast Utilities	Conduct a site assessment to determine what elements of the site have potential and where there is a need for partial demolition  Engage historic preservation specialist to make historic assessment of the building and associated structures.  Secure property by purchase or lease agreement by requesting through FERC relicensing that Northeast Utilities either offer Texon mill and other two buildings associated with the property to the town or private developer or are put up for long-term lease.	Cost estimate unavailable  Northeast Utilities South Hadley Private Developer CDBG funds EOCD
<b>Create New South Hadley Riverfront Zoning Scheme</b>  South Hadley should prepare a Riverfront Plan which will be proactive and prepare the town for the state's Rivers bill. The plan will pull together many related efforts and give them all more credibility and strength for riverfront protection and economic development.	South Hadley PVPC South Hadley Falls Revitalization Committee South Hadley Water Supply Protection Committee Zoning Task Force	Establish broad-based local task force to work on development of new riverfront plan and zoning  Secure funding to prepare Riverfront Plan which will be proactive and be prepared for the state's river's bill.  Draft a zoning bylaw that will address riverfront issues by amending and enhancing draft language and district boundaries for the Connecticut Riverfront Development Incentive Overlay and Connecticut Riverfront Protection Overlay District that was prepared by PVPC  Develop educational materials and meet with civic groups  Implement the zoning bylaw by adoption in town meeting	Cost estimate unavailable  EOCD via PVPC EOCD via Municipal Incentive Grant (MIG) South Hadley
<b>Small Boat Access off of Alvord Street</b>	South Hadley South Hadley Canal Committee	Seek to develop a canoe access area off the Bagg Road right-of-way at the river's edge	Cost estimate unavailable  Public Access Board Chapter 60b Waterways Improvement funds
<b>Route 116 Riverfront Park</b>	South Hadley South Hadley Canal Committee	Explore the potential for the development of a riverfront park on land adjacent to the Route 116 bridge in South Hadley Falls, in cooperation with Northeast Utilities	Cost estimate unavailable  Northeast Utilities Chapter 60b Waterways Improvement funds

## **ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:**

### **1) Development of a South Hadley Falls to Chicopee, Connecticut Riverfront Trail:**

- A committee has been established that will oversee planning and future development of the trail. The committee includes members from both South Hadley and Chicopee.
- Site assessments are underway to determine the ownership, potential easement, and structural issues.
- A partial conceptual plan has been completed.

### **2) Revitalization of the Texon Mill and Associated Structures:**

- Discussions have taken place with a planning group in South Hadley.
- Discussions have taken place with representatives of Northeast Utilities.
- A request from the town and planning group is being prepared for Northeast Utilities in the Holyoke Dam relicensing.

### **3) Create New South Hadley Riverfront Zoning Scheme:**

- A planning group with representatives from different interests in South Hadley has met several times to develop ideas for new zoning.
- An application for a Municipal Incentive Grant (MIG) from EOCD is being prepared to establish a local riverfront zoning and management plan.

# Springfield Riverfront Revitalization Action Strategy



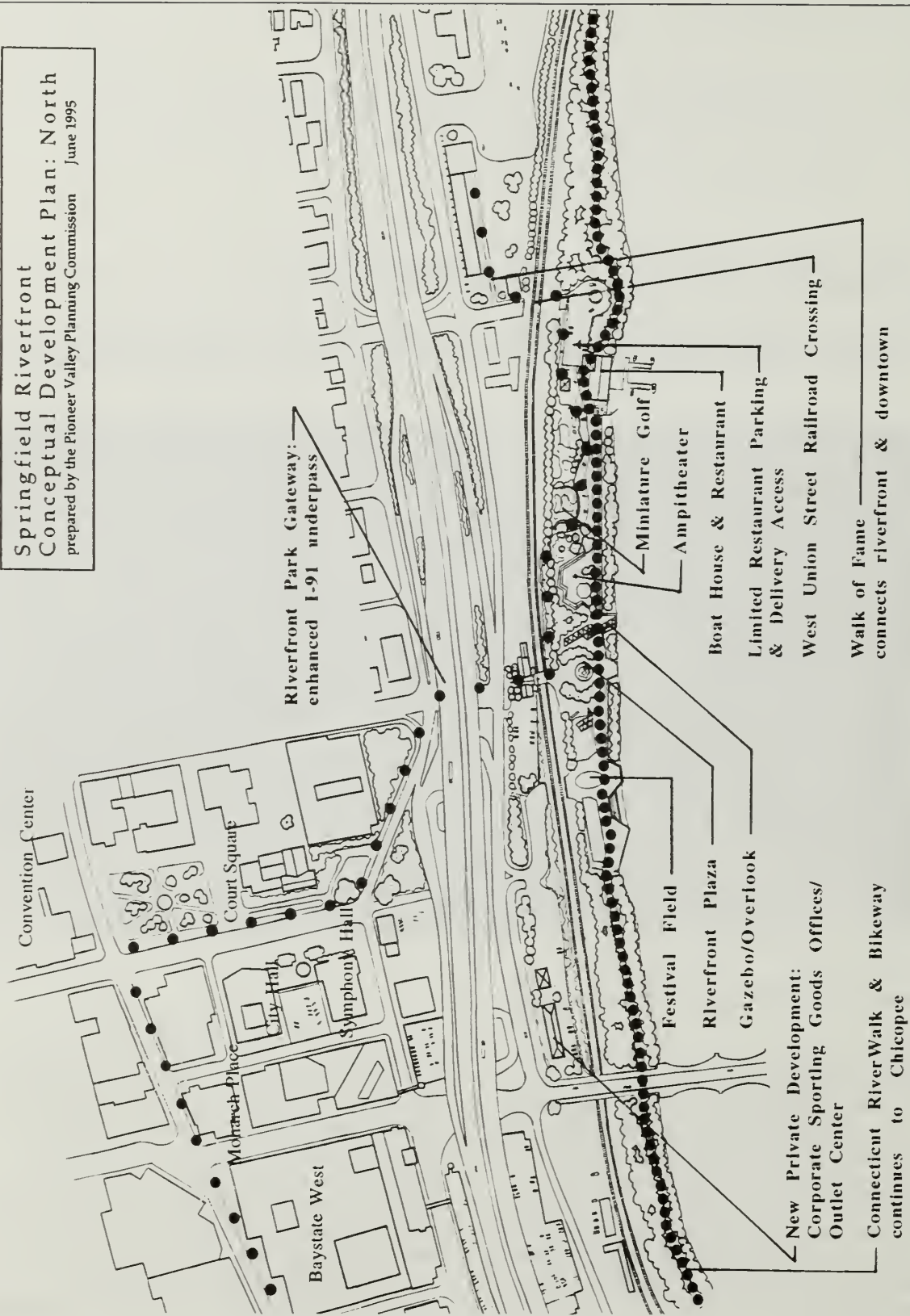
*Proposed route, Connecticut RiverWalk - Springfield*

## SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Springfield with a population of 156,983, is the largest Massachusetts city along the Connecticut River. The river played a key role in Springfield's historical development, and as former Mayor and now Congressman Richard Neal has stated, "Springfield's future is intimately tied to the Connecticut River." Mayor Markel has stated that the city, "must invest in its riverfront, in an effort to promote an increase in public usage, and appreciation of the region's most important natural and recreational resource."

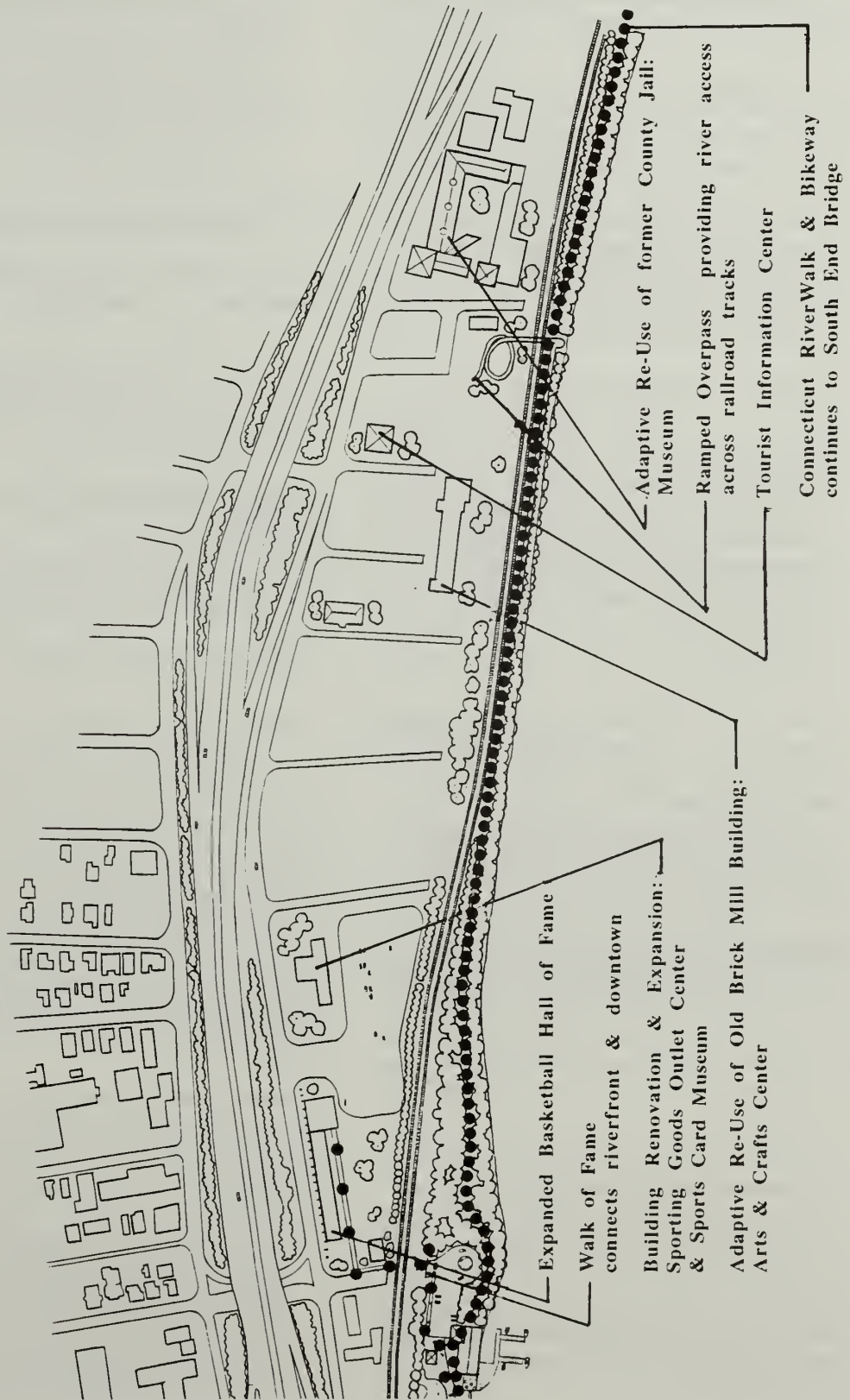
Over the past fifty years, Springfield has been gradually cut off from its riverfront by the unfortunate siting and construction of railroad tracks and Interstate 91 along the riverfront. Flood control walls and dikes and Columbus Avenue create further barriers to reaching the riverfront. In recent years, little river-oriented development has occurred in Springfield, and the construction of auto dealerships and gas stations along Columbus Avenue have not enhanced the city's riverfront accessibility. The city's main outdoor riverfront recreation site, Riverfront Park, has not been well used. It is isolated

**Springfield Riverfront**  
 Conceptual Development Plan: North  
 prepared by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission June 1995





Springfield Riverfront  
 Conceptual Development Plan: South  
 prepared by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission June 1995



and not well linked with other city points of interest, including the nearby Basketball Hall of Fame.

Despite Springfield's recognition of the importance of its riverfront and a profusion of plans for improvement, it remains an isolated area with poor public access and abandoned or underutilized properties. Yet these are precisely the qualities that give the area such tremendous potential. It is prime undeveloped or underdeveloped waterfront real estate in the very heart of the region's urban center with easy access to Interstate 91, and its 85,000 average daily vehicle trips, including many tourists.

In developing an action plan for Springfield's riverfront, the following facts must be considered:

- Springfield's riverfront, with beautification and improved public access, would be an excellent amenity to attract commercial development;
- Springfield is the birthplace of basketball, and the Basketball Hall of Fame is a key anchor located on the riverfront attracting 175,000 visitors annually;
- Springfield has a rich industrial history strongly linked to the river;
- over 31 million motorists drive past Springfield's riverfront (most without stopping) each year. A significant percentage of these motorists are potential tourists;
- the Connecticut RiverWalk will link various riverfront sites with attractive pedestrian and bicycle paths.

Springfield's riverfront holds enormous potential to become the central focus of the region's urban life, and to develop river-oriented attractions similar to those in Chattanooga, Portland, Oregon, San Antonio and Columbus. But Springfield must follow the lead of these other successful communities, and take the following steps.

- Create a theme for the riverfront to attract both development and tourism. Springfield should build on the foundation created by the Basketball Hall of Fame and develop the riverfront along a basketball or sports theme.
- Establish a public-private partnership to develop the riverfront, using public funds for riverfront amenities to leverage private development commitments.

- Invest city funds to make improvements in the riverfront. The city should take concrete, short-term actions to demonstrate its commitment to the riverfront, change the perception of city inaction, and encourage private developers to take a stronger interest in the riverfront.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION STRATEGIES**

### **Developing Springfield's Riverfront for Tourism with a Sports Theme**

A successful public-private partnership is needed to develop the riverfront along a basketball/sports theme. The city of Springfield should take a lead role in the following elements.

#### **Design and Construct the Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway**

A 3.8 mile segment of this regional pedestrian and bicycle path, from the South End Bridge to the Chicopee line, is due to begin construction in 1996. This facility is described in detail in previous sections of this report.

#### **Develop a new "Walk of Fame"**

This walkway would parallel the Connecticut RiverWalk and would link the Basketball Hall of Fame to downtown Springfield via Riverfront Park. The Walk of Fame would feature basketball-shaped emblems for each Basketball Hall of Fame member, embedded in the pavement with shoe imprints. The walkway would encourage tourists and visitors to the Hall of Fame to visit the riverfront and downtown businesses, and vice versa. The Walk of Fame should be developed by a partnership of the city, the Basketball Hall of Fame, and corporate partners.

#### **Complete Riverfront Park Improvements**

A complete renovation of Riverfront Park is planned by the city's Recreation Department, to be developed in cooperation with one or more private business entities. It would include:

- Boathouse/Restaurant Complex - a new rowing boathouse available for use by area colleges, youth groups and boat clubs, with a privately-operated riverfront restaurant and banquet facility which would be available for conferences, weddings and similar functions.

- Miniature golf course - a three season miniature golf course designed to reflect the riverfront's natural setting and include elements of the Basketball Hall of Fame, on a three acre site;
- Festival Field improvements - this site will be upgraded with a sound system, updating of traffic control signals and provision of crosswalks from parking decks to increase the number of events which can be sponsored at the site, including outdoor concerts, craft fairs, auto shows, and art in the park.

### **Develop Riverfront Entryways and Public Amenities with a Basketball Theme**

The main pedestrian entryways linking downtown to the riverfront should be improved with designs and public art, using a basketball theme, to attract pedestrians to the riverfront. New lighting and street furniture would be installed along the riverfront, also using a basketball theme. Other improvements which should be undertaken by the city include new lighting, crosswalks, and a plaza area under I-91.

### **Construct a CSO Correction and Storage Facility**

An underground storage facility to hold excess stormwater and combined sewage should be developed along the riverfront, to eliminate combined sewer overflows adjacent to Riverfront Park.

### **Expand Riverfront Zoning District**

Currently, Springfield's Riverfront zoning district encompasses nearly all properties with frontage on the Connecticut River, with one significant exception. Property owned by Amtrak, extending from Riverfront Park, south to the Longmeadow town line, is currently excluded from the zone. The city should seek Amtrak approval to expand the zone to include this property.

### **Provide Increased Security for Riverfront**

The Springfield riverfront currently suffers from a serious image problem. It is widely perceived as a place that is not safe for families and law-abiding citizens, a place where undesirables hang out. A very substantive change could be made to improve this image by establishing a daily police sweep of the Riverfront Park area to eliminate drug trafficking, prostitution and other problems in the area. This change should be widely publicized to encourage greater public use of the riverfront.

## **Private Sector Role in Riverfront Economic Development**

The Basketball Hall of Fame, sporting goods manufacturers, other corporations and small businesses are important partners to work with the city of Springfield in a successful riverfront development effort:

### **Develop an Expanded Basketball Hall of Fame**

The Basketball Hall of Fame should remain at its current site along the riverfront, where it is the keystone to future development. Plans to expand the facility are currently being developed.

### **Develop Corporate Sporting Goods Offices and Sporting Goods Outlet Center**

New retail and office space should be developed on the riverfront, designed to take advantage of the location near the Basketball Hall of Fame to lure sporting goods manufacturers as primary tenants. First floor space should be designed to establish a sporting goods outlet center. Upper floors include space for corporate offices of sporting goods manufacturers.

### **Promote Other Sports-oriented Businesses and Events**

Other businesses should be sought for the riverfront to build on and support the sports-tourism development theme for the riverfront. Ideal examples could include a new sports card museum and retail shops, and a new IMAX theater with a sports focus. Special sports events should be secured and marketed for the riverfront including the "3 on 3 Hoop It Up" basketball tournament, other basketball events, rowing races, fishing tournaments, bike races and triathlons.



## SPRINGFIELD RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommended Action	Participant Organization(s)	Key Milestones	Estimated Cost/ Funding Sources
<b>PUBLIC SECTOR ELEMENTS OF RIVERFRONT STRATEGY</b>			
<b>Develop Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway</b> In Springfield, the Riverwalk will extend from the South End Bridge to Chicopee. There will be a need to construct pedestrian/bike ramps to provide access over the Amtrak rail line, and to link the path to the South End Bridge.	City of Springfield PVPC Connecticut Riverwalk Committee	Secure necessary land or easements from private landowners Determine location(s) of ramp(s) linking Riverwalk to Hall of Fame and other sites, secure necessary lands Complete engineering & design plans Seek permits and approval of designs for use of flood control dikes Seek approval from Mass. Highway Department for South End Bridge linkage, ramps Secure state or federal funding for construction Initiate construction of 5.8 mile segment from South End Bridge to Chicopee	\$3 million ISTE Enhancement grant City of Springfield Open Space Bond
<b>Develop a Walk of Fame</b> This facility would link the Basketball Hall of Fame to Riverfront Park and the city center, with an attractive walkway adorned with brass plaques honoring inductees into the Hall of Fame	PVPC Springfield Park Dept. Basketball Hall of Fame	Develop budget and preliminary design plans, including design of brass plaques for Hall of Fame members Seek support and funds from city, Basketball Hall of Fame, corporate sponsors Develop final engineering and design plans Construct facility	\$315,000 Open Space Bond Basketball Hall of Fame City of Springfield Corporate sponsors Sale of personalized paving bricks
<b>Complete Riverfront Park Improvements</b> Improvements will include: boathouse/restaurant and banquet facility; a miniature golf operation; an upgrade of festival field for concerts and events; and other elements listed separately in this table.	Springfield Park Dept. Business co-sponsor	Complete final engineering and design plans Identify business co-sponsor(s) to undertake restaurant/boathouse and mini-golf portions of project Secure funding for project from municipal bond, business co-sponsor(s), available grants Complete construction	\$2,938,00 Municipal bond Business co-sponsor Urban Self-help grant
<b>Expand Riverfront Zoning District</b> Inclusion of land currently owned by Amtrak would expand this district to include the entire length of the riverfront in Springfield	PVPC City of Springfield	Initiate discussions with Amtrak officials Seek formal support for zoning change from Amtrak Seek city council approval	No cost
<b>Increased Security for Riverfront</b> Establish daily patrols of riverfront to eliminate drug trafficking, prostitution and other illicit activities	Springfield Police Dept. Springfield Park Dept.	Establish daily patrols of riverfront area	No cost estimate available City of Springfield



Recommended Action	Participant Organization(s)	Key Milestones	Estimated Cost/ Funding Sources
<b>Develop Riverfront Entryways and Public Amenities with a Basketball Theme</b> Entrance facades, crosswalks, plazas, and public art should be developed at the State, Broad and Union Street entrances to encourage public use of the riverfront	Springfield Park Department Springfield Public Works Dept. Basketball Hall of Fame	Develop design/engineering plans for crosswalk, entrance facades, and public art Seek grant and municipal funds, private sector contributions Complete construction	\$703,000  City of Springfield Urban Self-help grant ISTEA Enhancement grant
<b>Develop Additional Riverfront Park Improvements</b> Improvements would include a fishing pier on the Connecticut River, a botanical garden and arboretum, basketball courts, and a fast-food lunch restaurant at the former "train station" building at the entrance to the park	Springfield Park Dept. Business co-sponsor	Complete final engineering and design plans Identify business co-sponsor(s) to undertake restaurant portion of project Secure funding for project from municipal bond, business co-sponsor(s), available grants Complete construction Hire full-time horticulturist for botanical gardens	No cost estimate available  Municipal bond Business co-sponsor Urban Self-help grant
<b>Sponsor and Promote Riverfront Events</b> To attract people back to the river, the riverfront should be used for more events such as the "3 on 3 Hoop it Up" tournament, other basketball events, rowing races, bike races, triathalons, fishing derbies, and outdoor concerts	City of Springfield Basketball Hall of Fame Business sponsors	Establish a new city staff position to coordinate riverfront events Identify potential events and sponsors Coordinate events	No cost estimate available  City of Springfield Basketball Hall of Fame Business sponsors
<b>Establish Combined Sewer Overflow Correction and Storage Facility</b> This underground facility would eliminate CSOs along the riverfront, and improve water quality for recreation	Springfield Public Works Dept.	Determine location and acquire lands if needed Develop design/engineering plans Seek grant and municipal funds Complete construction	\$30-60 million  Municipal bond State Revolving Loan Fund (low interest loan)

## PRIVATE SECTOR ELEMENTS OF RIVERFRONT STRATEGY

<b>Expand the Basketball Hall of Fame</b>	Basketball Hall of Fame	Undertake feasibility study of expansion options Establish partnership with city, other businesses for joint efforts to develop riverfront with basketball theme Complete design plans, including linkages to other riverfront sites (i.e. park, Riverwalk) Implement construction plans	No cost estimate available  Basketball Hall of Fame Business partners
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Recommended Action	Participant Organization(s)	Key Milestones	Estimated Cost/ Funding Sources
<b>Develop a Corporate Sporting Goods Office and Outlet Center</b> The riverfront, both north and south of the Basketball Hall of Fame, is an ideal location for development of sports-oriented specialty retail shops or outlet stores, and for corporate sporting goods office centers	Basketball Hall of Fame Private businesses City of Springfield	Identify location(s) for facilities Establish partnership with city, other businesses for joint efforts to develop riverfront with basketball theme Complete design plans, including linkages to other riverfront sites (i.e. park, Riverwalk) Implement construction plans	No cost estimate available  Basketball Hall of Fame Private investment CDBG or Economic Development grant
<b>Develop Other Sports and Tourism-oriented Businesses</b> Other key ventures for the riverfront could include development of a sports card museum and outlet center, an IMAX theater showing basketball films, bike and boat rental businesses along the riverfront, a family athletic club, a freshwater aquarium, a tourist information center, an arts and crafts center and riverfront vendor kiosks	Basketball Hall of Fame Private businesses City of Springfield	Identify location(s) for facilities Establish partnership with city, other businesses for joint efforts to develop riverfront with basketball theme Complete design plans, including linkages to other riverfront sites (i.e. park, Riverwalk) Implement construction plans	No cost estimate available  Basketball Hall of Fame Private investment CDBG or Economic Development grant

#### ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:

##### 1) Develop Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway:

(See regional actions taken to date)

##### 2) Preliminary Riverfront Park Improvement Design Plans:

The Springfield Parks and Recreation Department has completed a preliminary design for park improvements, including a boathouse/restaurant, miniature golf, Walk of Fame, and other facilities;

##### 3) Basketball Hall of Fame Expansion Study:

The Basketball Hall of Fame has commissioned a study to assess the feasibility of expanding its current facilities and developing other complimentary facilities and businesses on the riverfront;

##### 4) Riverfront Zoning:

Discussions have been initiated with Amtrak officials to gain support for including Amtrak property in the city's Riverfront Zone.

# West Springfield Riverfront Revitalization Action Strategy



*Proposed Riverfront Park - West Springfield*

## **SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The town of West Springfield is located on the west side of the Connecticut River. Its southern border adjoins the Westfield River which flows into a confluence with the Connecticut River. West Springfield, with a population of 27,537, is a mostly urbanized town consisting primarily of commercial and residential areas.

The Connecticut River fronts the entire eastern border of West Springfield. Like many nearby communities, however, most of West Springfield's

riverfront is obscured by development and a major roadway (Route 5). There is also a dike system in West Springfield which prevents direct access to both the Connecticut and Westfield Rivers.

In developing an action plan for West Springfield's Connecticut Riverfront, the major objective should be creating areas along the river where people can access and enjoy the river. There is a need for a riverfront park in West Springfield and the location targeted by the town is a good candidate for revitalization efforts. The site could provide picnic areas, a small boat access point, recreational fields, trails for



walking and connection to the Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway when it is completed.

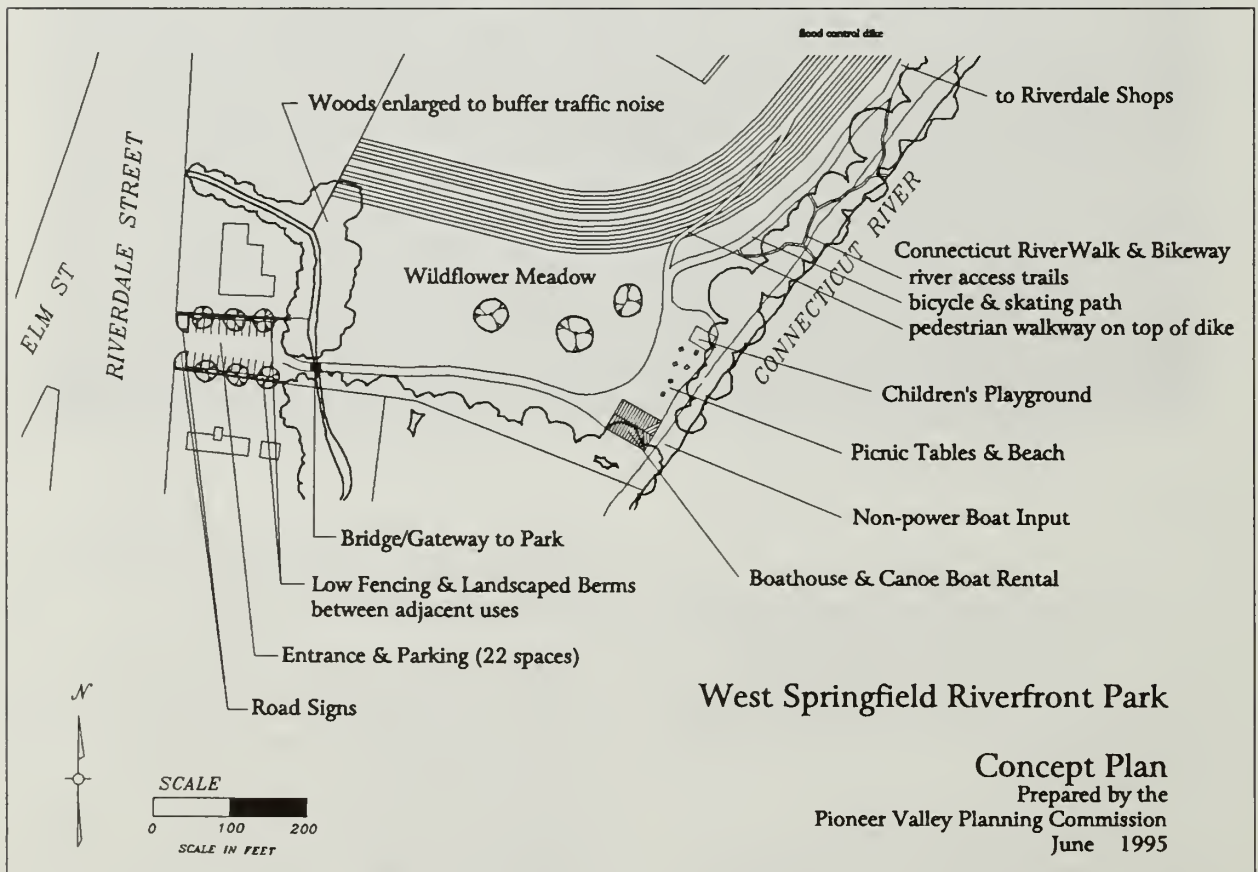
## RECOMMENDED ACTION STRATEGIES

### Develop a West Springfield Riverfront Park

A municipal riverfront park should be developed off Riverdale Street just below where Route I-91 crosses the Connecticut River. The area lies behind the Riverdale Shops and then opens up below the dike after the Riverdale Shops. There is a rough parking lot and entrance at the intersection of Route 5 and Elm Street. The site's existing parking area needs improvements such as new paving, landscaping, signage, and lighting. The parking area leads to a large field which could be made into a playing field. A footpath could be developed leading from the parking area to the field and across a stream which would require the construction of a foot bridge.

Beyond the field is an area appropriate for a small boat access point into the river and an extensive floodplain forest leading back behind the Riverdale Shops and the dike. This floodplain forest could accommodate a foot trail extending from the parking lot at the riverfront park to the Riverdale Shops parking lot. The whole length of the riverfront park will access the Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway which will be developed on the dike system.

Development of the riverfront park will be a major component of the town's master planning process which will begin in the latter part of 1995. The residents of the town will be involved in the vision of the park and in developing a conceptual design. In the meantime, the town should explore ownership or easement agreements on the parcels that remain in private ownership.



## WEST SPRINGFIELD RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommended Action	Participating Organization(s)	Key Tasks/Milestone(s)	Estimated Costs/ Funding Sources
<b>Development of a West Springfield Riverfront Park</b> A riverfront park off of Riverdale Street in West Springfield would improve access to and appreciation of the Connecticut River. It would connect to the Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway and would be a needed recreation amenity.	PVPC West Springfield	Identify and contact property owners that fall within area of proposed park informing them of plans Secure ownership or easement of parcels not currently owned by town Develop a conceptual plan with the public through master plan process Secure a design and engineering plan Secure construction of elements of the riverfront park Develop a long-term maintenance plan	Cost estimate unavailable EOCD via PVPC West Springfield Urban Self-Help
<b>Development of Connecticut RiverWalk and Spur Trails:</b> West Springfield should pursue funding to plan and construct the segment of the riverwalk along its flood control dike system. Spur trails could extend this system along the Westfield River.	PVPC West Springfield Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway Task Force	Complete feasibility study to determine potential for linking West Springfield to other Riverwalk segments. Investigate the feasibility of extending a Riverwalk spur trail on flood control dikes along the Westfield River	Cost estimate unavailable West Springfield ISTE A Enhancement grant
<b>Westfield River Canoe Trail</b> West Springfield should work with Decorative Specialties Inc. (DSI) to develop canoe put-in / take-out facilities along the Westfield River above and below the Mittineague Dam	PVPC West Springfield Decorative Specialties Inc.	Secure funds through FERC relicensing process Develop design plans for upstream and downstream access areas Construct access areas Develop long-term maintenance plans for access areas	Decorative Specialties Inc.
<b>Westfield River Fish Passageway</b> As part of FERC relicensing process for the Mittineague Dam, DSI. should develop a fish passageway to allow salmon and other anadromous fish access to the upper Westfield River	PVPC West Springfield Decorative Specialties Inc.	Secure agreement through FERC relicensing process Construct fish passageway	Decorative Specialties Inc.

### ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:

#### 1) Development of a New West Springfield Riverfront Park

- Meetings held between PVPC, West Springfield Planning Department, and Board of Selectmen to discuss plans for new riverfront park.
- Identification of private property owners within area of potential park.
- Discussions with owners of private property regarding potential sale, lease or easement agreements.





# Profiles of Success Stories from Across the United States



*Riverfront promenade, Mississippi River - St. Paul, Minnesota*

## INTRODUCTION

Communities across the United States are rediscovering the natural beauty and economic value of their waterfronts. Waterfronts can become the magical element that brings people back to a community for recreation, business, housing, and tourism.

There are so many cities across the country that have successfully reinvigorated their waterfronts that it is impossible to describe them all. The examples chosen for this report are those that shed light on projects that are being considered for communities

along the Connecticut River in the Pioneer Valley region.

Communities embarking on riverfront revitalization often want to know:

- How does a city or town “get the ball rolling” on riverfront projects?
- Who should be involved in the planning process?
- How do we draw citizens and the private sector into the process?

- What projects are appropriate for and will work in our community?
- What kinds of funding sources are available, and how do we pursue them?

This report will describe a few places in the U.S. that have “success stories” on their river or waterfronts:

- Burlington, Vermont;
- Chattanooga, Tennessee;
- Hartford, Connecticut; and
- Minneapolis, Minnesota.

All these places boast waterfront projects and renewal processes that are models for other areas working on similar endeavors. The following summaries will provide some answers to the above questions by describing the steps that moved other communities’ successful projects from plans into action.

## PROFILES OF WATERFRONT SUCCESS STORIES

### Burlington, Vermont’s Lake Champlain Waterfront Revitalization

#### How the Revitalization Process Began

Burlington is a medium-sized city located in north-western Vermont on Lake Champlain. Its waterfront is adjacent to the historic downtown which has undergone major improvements in the past couple of decades.

The Burlington waterfront was once owned by Central Vermont Railroad and some industrial companies. As the railroad discontinued use of the rails and adjacent industries left Burlington, the rails, land and buildings were left behind with little or no use. Over the years, the potential for activity on the waterfront, and its likely connection to the downtown, inspired many attempts to revitalize the waterfront. The efforts made by different city administrations or developers usually failed due to lack of public support or funding.

In 1972, the city council voted to change the waterfront zoning to remove old obstacles and encourage improvements. Among other directives, the new regulations required that abandoned oil tanks on the

waterfront be removed over a period of years.

During the 1980s, Burlington revisited the waterfront. Public officials pursued developers who would be willing to construct an entire waterfront redevelopment project. In 1985, a \$100 million waterfront development was proposed by one developer. The proposal went before the city’s citizenry to approve tax increment financing to pay for the development. The vote did not achieve its needed two-thirds majority.

In the late 1980s, Mayor Sanders and his staff determined that the best way to initiate change on the waterfront was to support individual projects rather than hiring one developer to redevelop the entire waterfront. In 1986, a \$2.9 million bond was approved to make waterfront improvements, including a boathouse. In 1987, the board of aldermen adopted a resolution to ensure that the city acquire and enhance waterfront properties for the public’s benefit. In 1988, while development of a publicly-funded boathouse was underway, the city proposed a nine-mile bike path and promenade. Funding through municipal bonds was approved by the voters in a referendum vote. This induced an effort to obtain the Central Vermont Rail land which was the location for much of the bike path and promenade.

In 1989, the Vermont Supreme Court decided that all the Central Vermont Railroad land along the waterfront was to revert back to public ownership if not used by the railroad — this was an application of the public trust doctrine. The court action was a tremendous boost for the revitalization efforts and allowed the city to move forward with the bike path and promenade and other elements of waterfront plans.

About the same time, Mayor Sanders left office to become a member of the United States Congress. Peter Clavelle was elected mayor, and the new director of economic development, Michael Monte, put together a ten-year plan for the waterfront — which was approved 2:1 by the voters in a referendum vote in 1990. The plan set forth about thirteen projects that the city and private developers could complete incrementally as financing becomes available. Since 1990, there has been substantial progress in both public and private reinvestment in properties on the waterfront.



*Lake Champlain waterfront promenade -Burlington, Vermont*

### **Key Players in the Waterfront Revitalization Process**

Many players have been involved in the waterfront revitalization process. The city's mayors have provided crucial leadership over the past few decades, including Bernard Sanders, Peter Clavelle, and Peter Brunelle — the present mayor. Each of these officials has been instrumental in waterfront revitalization by making a commitment to waterfront projects through municipal funding and directing their staffs to work on related projects.

Because of the leadership shown by the mayors, other important figures in the process have been the staff in the city's planning department, community and economic development department, and the parks and recreation department. These three departments were responsible for a report that targeted most of the present and future sites for revitalization, and which detailed the types of mechanisms available to both acquire and develop different sites. The city's economic development department was instrumental in developing the ten-year plan that got the "incremental implementation of projects" approach started.

### **Public and Private Involvement**

The city of Burlington refers to its waterfront as the "people's waterfront" of Burlington. Those involved

in the planning process have considered public education and awareness of waterfront issues to be the largest and most important task in the revitalization process. During the past few decades, there have been many opportunities for citizens to speak out on the different decisions being made about the waterfront - mostly through public forums and referendum votes.

Public forums included focus group meetings held by the city, inviting different interests to discuss waterfront issues. In addition, the city held neighborhood planning assemblies to work with individual neighborhood groups.

Significant elections were held on many elements of the waterfront. In 1985, the vote was called for the citizens to approve \$100 million in municipal bonds to pay a developer to build an entire waterfront for the city. The citizens voted this down. In 1990, the voters of Burlington approved the ten-year waterfront master plan.

Individuals who have been vital to the process include Marcel Beaudin, a designer from Burlington who designed the community boathouse. Beaudin is currently active in developing a citizens boating program and sailing center in the old Moran plant



which is also a prominent feature on the waterfront.

Other private interests have been Melinda Moulton and Lisa Steele of Main Street Landing Company. These developers have major projects on the waterfront, including the renewal of Union Station rail station. They refer to themselves as “not just your typical developers” because of the approach they use in designing their projects to integrate with the environment. Moulton and Steele are now invested in the future of the waterfront. They report that they were attracted to the waterfront because they could see the public investment taking place there.

### **Highlights of Burlington’s Waterfront Projects**

#### *The Community Boathouse*

The Burlington Community Boathouse, which opened in 1988, was developed and is managed by the City Parks and Recreation Department. The Parks and Recreation Department leases space to vendors who run boat rentals, operate a restaurant and other various activities. It is a 6,700 square foot, two-story building that was built on a barge imported from Texas. The barge was floated from Texas all the way to its current location on Lake Champlain. The boathouse was built on a barge because of the uncertainty of the waterfront plans at the time. The boathouse project had funding, but the whole waterfront was yet to be decided upon, so the project proponents created a moveable boathouse to fit in where the final waterfront plans would best accommodate.

The boathouse contains space for boat rentals, a second story for banquets or meetings, and docks from which water activities take place. It is a wooden structure with a red tin roof that has big decks, peaked dormers and “old time” boathouse character. Adjoining the boathouse, is a 5000-foot fishing pier and 4.5-acre waterfront park.

The community boathouse project, like other projects in Burlington, was a success due to many different players working together. The most important factor, from what participants have described, has been the willingness of city leaders to commit to the project, to make decisions on specific details and funding mechanisms, and to involve the voting public who would ultimately make or break the project.

The community boathouse was financed by public funding. The proposed project was put on the ballot for approval of municipal bonds (general obligation bond) to design and build the boathouse. The voters approved municipal bonds to pay for the project. The total cost of the boathouse was \$1.19 million.

#### *Waterfront Park*

Waterfront Park serves as the central piece of the Burlington waterfront. It connects the waterfront to the downtown and provides links to other waterfront amenities, like the boathouse and a fishing pier. This park was developed through public funding.

#### *Promenade and Bike Path*

Burlington has completed a nine-mile bike path and promenade which draws many people to the waterfront. The promenade and bike path were crucial to the beginning of the waterfront revival and were spawned by civic leaders and many citizens. The funding for the bike path and promenade was public and some of that burden was lifted by the Vermont Supreme Court’s decision allowing the public trust doctrine to apply to the lands that had been owned by the Vermont Railroad.

#### *Lake Champlain Basin Science Center*

The Lake Champlain Basin Science Center is a regional educational and research center based in the old Naval Reserve building under construction on the waterfront. It is a self-supporting, nonprofit research facility which will also provide learning experiences for all age groups about water resources, lake ecology, the history of Lake Champlain, and cultural aspects of the area as well. The University of Vermont will be instrumental in the operation of the facility and will utilize it for its Lake Studies Program.

A non-profit board of directors was established in May 1993 to oversee the project from construction to operation. Board members include citizens, other museum representatives, UVM representatives, and city officials. The board, the city, and the University of Vermont are working together to coordinate the project. This board will operate the facility when it is completed.

The Center’s total cost is about \$10 million to be completed by 1996. Some of the funds have come

from public and private sources. The operating budget is expected to be around \$700,000 coming from admissions (approximately 100,000 - 200,000 visitors are expected per year), retail sales, classes, rentals, and other private and governmental sources.

#### *Cornerstone Building, Wing Building and Union Station*

Melinda Moulton and Linda Steele are two developers with the Main Street Landing Company. They are renovating the old Cornerstone, Wing and Union Railroad station buildings and turning them into a mixed use (residential, retail, artist studios, cafe), waterfront oriented complex including a commuter rail station. The developers are currently in the process of reconstruction and have worked closely with the city and citizens to see that it will work with the waterfront.

#### *Urban Reserve*

The Trust for Public Land was instrumental in assisting Burlington in its effort to acquire and protect a 45-acre section of the waterfront for an urban reserve. The piece of land connects to the bike path, the waterfront park and the old Moran plant which is being converted to a sailing center. It is also contiguous to the downtown. Fifty percent of the reserve area has been set aside for passive recreation and conservation and it will be up to future generations to decide how development may occur on the rest of the site. This site was also purchased with public funds for \$1.92 million, with interim assistance from the Trust for Public Lands.

### **Revitalization of the Tennessee Riverfront in Chattanooga, Tennessee**

#### **How the Revitalization Process Began**

Chattanooga is a small city with a population of around 165,000 located in eastern Tennessee. The city of Chattanooga and surrounding Hamilton County host approximately 22 miles of the Tennessee riverfront.

In 1982, city council attention focused on a 600-acre open parcel of city and county-owned land on the riverfront. The council learned from interested citizens that this site was historic, dating back to the birthplace of the city. The council also learned that

the land was becoming dilapidated and a known hang out for “undesirable” characters. The city council established a task force comprised of local officials, private interests, and citizens — the Moccasin Bend Task Force — to study the area and determine the highest and best use for the property.

After a short time, the task force decided to hire a consulting firm, Carr, Lynch Associates of Cambridge, Massachusetts, to look at the 600-acre parcel, and also beyond its boundaries, to the 20-mile long Tennessee riverfront within the city and county lines. Carr, Lynch Associates prepared the Tennessee Riverpark (TR) Master Plan which was published in 1985. This plan was presented to more than 1,000 citizens who are now witnessing its implementation.

In 1986, as part of the TR plan, and under funding from a large local foundation (the Lyndhurst Foundation), a not-for-profit organization was formed called the RiverCity Company, (now called RiverValley Partners). The RiverCity Co. board consisted of public and private sector representatives whose sole mission was to work on implementing the TR master plan. The RiverCity Co. was directed to spearhead the revitalization effort, stimulating interest and investment in the riverfront.

For completion of all the projects in the master plan, it would cost approximately \$750 million including both private and public investment through public-private partnerships. Jim Bowen with the RiverCity Co., (also the chair of the Chattanooga/Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission), worked the first two years on fundraising and raised more than \$12 million from eight local foundations and seven financial institutions. RiverCity Co. was charged with fundraising as an on-going effort since the master plan called for twenty years of projects that would bring new industry, offices, housing, jobs, and visitors to the Tennessee River in Chattanooga.

#### **Key Players in the Process**

Several individuals and groups were instrumental in initiating action on the Tennessee Riverfront. Citizens, city council members and the mayor were all concerned with the state of the riverfront and were able to direct the city’s attention to it.

With the state of Tennessee interested in the develop-

ment of a regional aquarium, the governor became involved in the process to promote the idea and to provide some of the funding. The state's backing became very important in luring other interests, including private interests to the project.

The regional planning agency, Chattanooga/Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission has been involved throughout the process both being integral in the planning process and in working together with the other governmental entities and the University of Tennessee - including the Riverfront Downtown Planning Center. Jim Bowen, the chair of the Planning Commission, has provided a link between the planning agency and the RiverCity Company.

Staff and students at the city's Riverfront Downtown Planning and Design Center have been integral in the designing of elements of downtown to incorporate with the riverfront.

### **Public and Private Involvement**

While many different entities were involved in the effort to revitalize the Tennessee riverfront, the public had many opportunities to get involved and participate in the planning process. Early on, a citizen-based planning group, that existed before the establishment of the RiverCity Company, Chattanooga Venture, conducted "community visioning" meetings for the area and was able to elicit involvement from many participants.

Because of the interest of Jack Lupton from the Coca Cola Company (Chattanooga boasts the first Coca Cola bottling plant in the US) the private sector was present early in the process. Jack Lupton helped get the fundraising effort underway and was a great spokesperson for the project to other private sector interests in the area.

The Trust for Public Land has also been a participant, particularly in partnership with Chattanooga Parks and Recreation Department and the Chattanooga-Hamilton Regional Planning Commission in the establishment of greenways along the Tennessee River and around the Chattanooga metropolitan area.

## **Highlights of Projects on Chattanooga's Tennessee Riverfront**

### *Greenways*

There is an extensive greenways system throughout the city which abuts the Tennessee riverfront in several locations. The Tennessee Riverpark, which includes many of the projects described here, is referred to as the "central spine" of the greenways network. This segment reconnects people to historic and scenic features along the river and to other connections which radiate out into other areas. Eventually, the city's entire riverfront will be connected by a pedestrian and bicycle path.

### *Riverfront Downtown Planning and Design Center*

This planning and design center is a jointly-funded project between the city of Chattanooga, the RiverValley Partners, the Lyndhurst Foundation, the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, and the University of Tennessee - Knoxville School of Architecture. The center is located in offices in the downtown/waterfront area and was created so that students of architecture, design and planning could work on actual riverfront and downtown projects from within the work area. Stroud Watson, an architecture professor from UT oversees the students at the center and works with the Chattanooga-Hamilton Regional Planning Commission to develop projects for the students.

### *Tennessee Aquarium*

The Tennessee Aquarium was one of the first major projects to take hold in Chattanooga's riverfront. Its origins are many, but the idea culminated in 1985 when businessman Jack Lupton and the Lyndhurst Foundation pledged \$20 million as portions of funding for riverfront redevelopment, and particularly, an aquarium. The next year, the Chattanooga municipal budget contained a portion of funds for the riverfront and for an aquarium. At this point, a task force was created by Chattanooga Venture — the citizen planning group — to help the project materialize. The task force was instrumental in hiring Peter Chermayeff, of Cambridge Seven and Associates in Boston, to design the aquarium. RiverCity Company formed soon after this and became another guiding force. RiverCity Company established a board of directors that now manages the aquarium.

The Tennessee Aquarium is a 130,000 square foot,

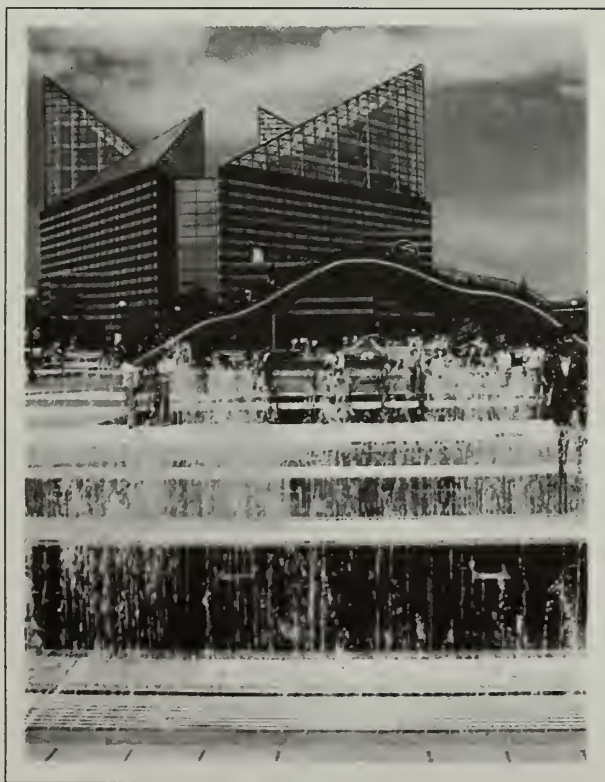


modern building that sits adjacent to the Tennessee River in the Riverpark. The building's roof is a set of four pyramids which allow plenty of natural light into the exhibits. It is a freshwater aquarium designed to complement the Tennessee River ecosystem. The aquarium contains simulated riverine habitats from places as far and wide as Appalachia to the Gulf of Mexico.

The entire aquarium project cost approximately \$45 million dollars which came from private contributions.

#### *Ross's Landing Park and Plaza*

Ross's Landing is an historic area near the Chattanooga downtown on the Tennessee riverfront which encompasses the Tennessee Aquarium and a park and plaza. The park and plaza occupy about four acres and set the stage for the aquarium. The park and plaza are an effort to mix history, culture and geography in exhibits that are actually part of the landscape. The park and plaza also serve as a gateway to other developments along the riverfront and connect to the riverwalk.



*Ross's Landing - Chattanooga, Tennessee*

The Ross's Landing Park and Plaza design process began in 1989 using a design team consisting of EDAW of Alexandria, Virginia, SITE of New York, Robert Seals Architects of Chattanooga, Stan Townsend of Chattanooga, Jack Mackie of Seattle, and Hensley-Schmidt Engineers of Chattanooga. A design committee made up of citizens, and city and county representatives (appointed by the city, county and RiverCity Company), worked with the design team to hold public meetings, conduct a review process and to choose final designs for the park and plaza. The project cost \$7,350,000 in state funds and \$2,500,000 in hotel-motel tax revenues.

#### *Walnut Street Bridge*

Walnut Street Bridge is also an historic site on the Chattanooga Riverfront. It is a 100 year old bridge that has been renovated to allow for non-motorized access to the Ross's Landing area and downtown from the north side of the Tennessee River. The bridge is seen as a linear park extension connecting the north and south sides of the river.

The bridge project cost approximately \$4 million and was funded by private, city and federal funds. About \$400,000 came from private funds while \$2 million came from federal monies and \$2.1 million came from city monies. Wooden planks with contributors names carved in them were used to build and also help finance the project.

#### *River Place*

The two-story River Place complex is a multifaceted development of 40,000 square feet which contains stores, restaurants, and a visitor's center. The complex was developed by RiverValley Partners (RiverCity Company). Shops and restaurants will take up the first floor and the visitors center will occupy the second floor.

The project cost about \$5 million and was funded primarily by a capital gift from a private foundation. It will be managed by the Chattanooga Area Convention and Visitor's Bureau and the city of Chattanooga and Hamilton County.

#### *Tivoli Theater*

Yet another historic feature on the waterfront, the Tivoli Theater is an early 1920s building that was enlarged and modernized to seat 1600 people. It was



a community effort calling upon each citizen and business to put forth some amount of money or effort to keep the theater “alive.”

The financing for this project came from the state, private contributions from Chattanooga/Hamilton County residents and corporations, and the city of Chattanooga. Its total cost for renovations was about \$7 million. The RiverCity Corporation acted as intermediary financier so implementation could take place while pledges were received from citizens and companies.

## **Recapturing the Riverfront in Hartford, Connecticut**

### **How the “Recapturing” Process Began**

Hartford is a medium-sized city in northwestern Connecticut with a population of 140,000. The Connecticut River flows through both Hartford and East Hartford providing 6.6 miles of riverfront. For many years, the river has been a detached presence in the Hartford area, and it is only recently that Hartford began bringing it back into the city by removing barriers and creating access for people from the downtown and other neighborhoods.

In 1980, there was a large public meeting held at the Old State House in Hartford to discuss the city’s riverfront and what could be done to improve it. The meeting was co-sponsored by the city, Travelers Insurance Company and other corporations, the Downtown Council, and the Connecticut River Watershed Council. Speakers from all around the country were invited to discuss their riverfront stories. The meeting was successful in focusing the public’s attention on the riverfront.

Also in 1980, the city’s planning department released a plan, “Basic Criteria for Guiding Riverfront Revitalization,” which outlined different phases of a “recapture” plan, but needed the help of an overseeing entity to get all the work done. The next year, in 1981, after public interest in the riverfront had grown, thanks to a festival with music and fireworks and other attractions, a not-for-profit organization, Riverfront Recapture, Inc., was established to be the area’s riverfront revitalization advocacy group.

Riverfront Recapture was officially created by municipal leaders, corporations and citizens to lead the effort in revitalizing the riverfront. The organization has a 65-member Board of Directors made up of corporate representatives, citizens, elected officials, non-profit group representatives and others who were the “stakeholders.”

A feasibility study by an outside consultant, also in 1981, showed that there was in fact potential for many revitalization projects but the effort needed a driving force. Riverfront Recapture began work that year with a staff of seven and an operating budget of \$500,000 per year. The goals of the organization included the addition of parks along the riverfront; improving the attractiveness of the riverfront; creating events and programs for the public; and improving access to the river throughout the Hartford area.

Many who have been involved in the recapturing effort attest to the existence of Riverfront Recapture as the continuity and momentum that has kept riverfront revitalization a civic and business priority. Throughout the 1990s, there have been many projects in the works; both through improvements to existing parks and completion of important new elements such as the riverwalk. Progress has also been made on a future landscaped pedestrian overpass over Route I-91 from the downtown directly to the riverfront.

Riverfront Recapture now oversees design and construction of all riverfront projects and then turns the projects over to the city for management.

### **Key Players in the Renewal Process**

Numerous people were instrumental in getting things started on the Hartford riverfront. Support from the beginning was evident from municipal leaders and citizens and the interest in developing a non-profit organization to oversee and conduct the various activities needed to revitalize the riverfront. The city planning department developed a plan in 1980 to help guide riverfront revitalization.

The Hartford Downtown Council and the Connecticut River Watershed Council also were key in bringing public interest back to the riverfront. Traveler’s Insurance Company has also contributed the help and support from many of its employees throughout the process.

## Public and Private Involvement

The planning and implementation process included over sixty civic, neighborhood and business group meetings as well as special workshops for key players. The public has stayed involved through both hands-on work and in financial contributions through many creative fundraising efforts including the "Duck Race" and "Friends of the River."

As mentioned, the riverfront renewal effort was initiated in part by the private sector with help from Travelers Insurance Company. Rory O'Neil an executive from Travelers Insurance Company is credited with having instigated some of the initial focus on the riverfront as well as helping with fundraising and getting other private interests involved.

## Highlights of Hartford's Riverfront Projects

### Events

Some of the most significant activity on the riverfront takes place because of the special focus that the city and Riverfront Recapture have placed on events that draw people to the river. Some of these include:

- Riverfront Rangers summer program for kids;
- triathlons;
- annual "Duck Race";
- regional bass fishing tournaments;
- Fourth of July festivities;
- community boating program and sailboat contests;
- riverfest celebrations; and
- concerts.

Riverfront Recapture has a professional events planner on staff to maintain a steady stream of festivities. Continuous events are seen by Riverfront Recapture as the key ingredient to keeping momentum going in a successful riverfront revitalization.

### Riverside Park

The Riverside Park is a revitalization effort largely orchestrated by Riverfront Recapture. It is a major riverfront park in the northern section of the downtown area with access to the riverwalk and many other amenities including a boat launch, fishing pier, footpaths, parking facilities, a children's play area, and grassy areas with picnic facilities. Hartford's

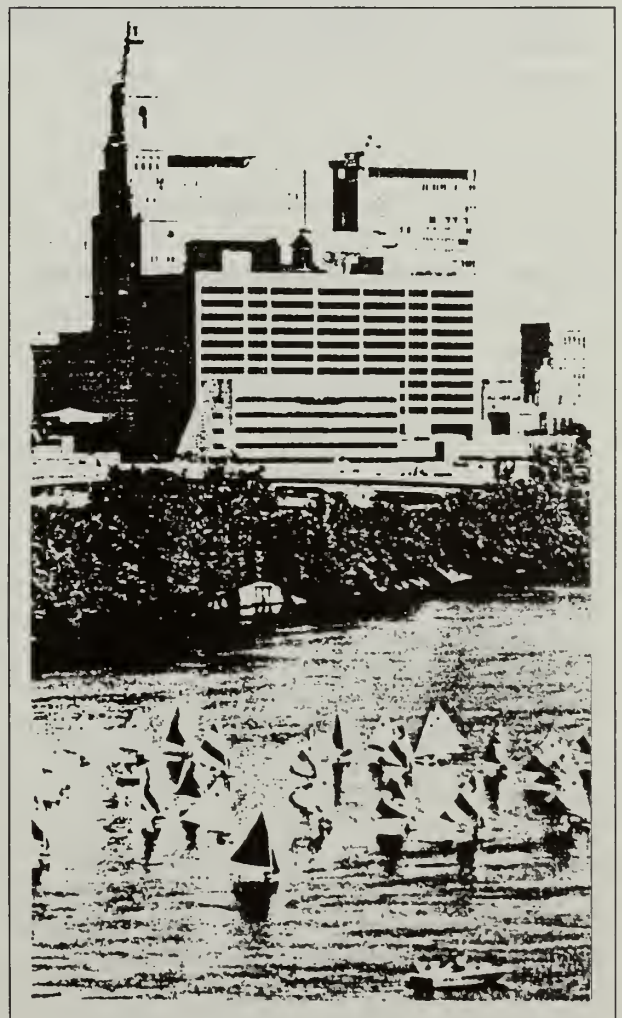
Parks and Recreation Department has also contributed to improvements to Riverside Park. Many of the enhancements made to Riverside Park have been funded through Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) funds.

### Riverwalk

The Riverwalk in Hartford is a three-mile loop that borders the river and will eventually connect several key areas in the downtown including boat launches, an amphitheater, play areas and several neighborhoods. The riverwalk is planned to extend from Windsor to Wethersfield.

### Charter Oak Landing

The Charter Oak Landing is a riverfront area which includes a playscape, boat launch area and a wharf. It is at the base of the Charter Oak bridge at the



southern end of the downtown's riverfront. It was initially constructed in 1989 with improvements made in the early 1990s. The riverwalk joins Charter Oak Landing to other features of the riverfront and Riverside Park. This amenity is another of Riverfront Recapture's efforts in conjunction with the city, funded by Connecticut DOT, the Federal Highway Administration, the Junior League of Hartford, and Community Development Block Grant funds and other sources.

#### *Constitution Plaza* (not yet completed)

Like many cities, Hartford has a major obstacle like a highway barricading the downtown from the riverfront. In Hartford's case, it is Interstate 91. However, the Connecticut DOT has a solution underway by building a major landscaped overpass which will serve as another park on the Connecticut riverfront. The overpass will include grassy terraces leading to the river's edge, also providing space as an amphitheater. The Connecticut DOT has funded the majority of this project, but other funds have come from private sources such as Travelers Insurance Company, citizen fund-raisers, and state bond funds.

This work also includes rebuilding a major link between Hartford and East Hartford — the Founder's Bridge — which will have an 18-foot wide walkway for pedestrians.

### **Mississippi Riverfront Renaissance in Minneapolis, Minnesota**

#### **How the "Riverfront Renaissance" Began**

Minneapolis, Minnesota is a large city located in Hennepin County in eastern Minnesota. Minneapolis, along with St. Paul, is part of the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The Mississippi River flows through the metropolitan area for approximately 70 miles. Minneapolis' central city's stretch of riverfront is approximately one mile — it is referred to as the "Mississippi Mile" and it includes the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Trail.

The "riverfront renaissance" that is underway in Minneapolis has several origins and driving forces. An important impetus is the rich history of the central riverfront and the remnants of an earlier era when it was the birthplace of the city. The St. Anthony Falls are prominent in the central riverfront and have

provided both hydropower and scenic views. The city has historically been known as the "Mill City" due to its numerous flour mills — all flanking the Mississippi riverfront for the hydropower to run the mills.

Another stimulus for riverfront renewal is the web of open spaces throughout the area which provide scenic solace in the middle of an active urban center. Park improvements and open space connections made to allow access throughout the riverfront are attracting residents, private developers, and visitors.

The seed for the "renaissance" was actually planted in 1680s when Father Louis Hennepin named St. Anthony Falls. Then again in 1866 when an island in the middle of the Mississippi River — Nicollet Island — was first proposed as a park. The more recent efforts to renew the riverfront and some of the amenities along it started in the 1980s when several park and urban renewal projects were initiated.

There have been incremental efforts to improve elements of the riverfront over the last several decades. The formation of the St. Anthony Heritage Board in 1988 by the state legislature sought to pull together some of the efforts, along with the city's Park and Recreation Board and the Community Development Agency.

#### **Key Players in the "Renaissance"**

The city's Park and Recreation Board, a semi-autonomous body, and the Community Development Agency (which acts as the redevelopment authority) have been key players in the redevelopment of Minneapolis' riverfront. The planning and implementation process has included over sixty civic, neighborhood and business group meetings as well as special workshops for key players.

The city created a Minneapolis Riverfront Coordination Board in the 1980s to reach an operational agreement between different municipal entities with some involvement in the riverfront. The heads of departments met on a regular basis to try and coordinate their departments' efforts. The coordination board disbanded after a short time. In its place, staff members of relevant municipal departments formed a Riverfront Technical Advisory Committee with help from the Community Development Agency. This informal group continues to meet weekly about different ideas and projects.





*Historic Stone Arch Bridge and bikeway over Mississippi - Minneapolis, Minnesota*

Another key public player in the riverfront revitalization process is the National Park Service. However, the scope of the NPS is much larger than the city's and has yet to fully be implemented. The NPS has put together a proposed plan for a seventy-mile stretch of the Mississippi River which includes the Minneapolis central riverfront area. It is in the environmental review stages, but will eventually be a systematic approach to protecting natural resources, recreation and culturally significant areas in the region.

### **Private Efforts**

The Pillsbury Company has been a key player in the city and especially the riverfront revitalization process due to its investment and commitment of funds to its own site. It has also contributed new jobs and played a role in stimulating other private interest in riverfront redevelopment.

There have been several public-private efforts that have spurred the process as well, in particular efforts of many private developers like St. Anthony Main in renovating and reusing mills throughout the riverfront. In addition, other companies such as Betty Crocker and General Mills maintain administrative offices within the Mills District. Many of the

following projects were at least in part made possible through private assistance.

### **Highlights of Minneapolis' Riverfront Projects**

#### *Central Riverfront Regional Park*

Central Riverfront Regional Park is a 150-acre area that includes, as its name describes, the central riverfront in Minneapolis. Its components include the following:

- West River Parkway (Great River Road) is a corridor along the west bank of the river with pedestrian paths and bikeways, and an interpretive Mills District which holds the historic water power canal;
- Boom Island is a 24-acre island created when a boom caught on a shallow point in the river and it filled in. This area includes picnic tables, parking lots, walks, a boat launch, a meadow area, and a riverfront promenade;
- Main Street is an area which was revitalized by the city of Minneapolis in 1978 and has inspired private development in its area ever since. It was improved with relaid cobblestones and curbs, bike paths, brick walks, landscaping, and street furniture;



- Father Hennepin Bluff Park is an 18-acre park with picnic facilities, open lawns and a shelter which was designed to look like the nearby Stone Arch Bridge. It also has dramatic views of the river and St. Anthony Falls and the downtown skyline. Steps, footpaths, and bridges have also been constructed for access to more views of the river's gorge;
- Nicollet Island is an island in the middle of the river which holds historic structures and open areas. A private high school, an inn, and a park pavilion are some of the features on this historic and beautiful island.
- St. Anthony Falls are both scenic and an obstacle to navigability of the river. Originally, they were the source of power which allowed the city of Minneapolis to become a mill city.

This park contains a series of open spaces and historic features owned by the city and operated and managed by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Some private elements are also included. Many of the sites within and adjacent to the park are the most historically significant sites in the city.

#### *Riverplace*

Riverplace is a \$100 million project on the east bank of the riverfront which was developed as a joint venture by several corporations. It is a mixed use development which integrates office, condominium, residential, recreational, and retail uses. It is referred to as an "international urban village." It has been completed and in operation since 1985. Another mixed use development on the riverfront is Heritage Landing which also has used some historic properties on the west side of the river as part of the project.

#### *St. Anthony Main*

St. Anthony Main is a large commercial development which includes the renovation of an old mattress factory and three 100-year old historic buildings. It also includes a new additions for condominiums, commercial space and a cinema complex. It has a pedestrian plaza with enclosed links to the retail development and a large parking facility.

#### *Pillsbury Company*

The Pillsbury Company has been an anchor to riverfront redevelopment due to its commitment to stay in Minneapolis and to revitalize its own site

nearby the riverfront. Since it made a commitment to retain a research and development facility in Minneapolis, it has completed improvements worth about \$10 million. When the Pillsbury Company completes its renovations, it will have generated \$20 million of capital improvements.

#### *Mills District*

Private developers have successfully renovated and reused several major mills that occupy prominent locations in the riverfront mills district. Different elements of the renovated mill buildings include a 76,000 square foot office building; a hotel; and a train station building with 416 market rate rental units with parking. Included in this district are Pillsbury Mill Complex and the Washburn-Crosby mill which includes such major companies as Betty Crocker and General Mills.

#### *Technology Corridor*

Technology Corridor is a joint venture between University of Minnesota, State of Minnesota, and sponsors from private industry. It started as a high-tech initiative in 1983 and is now host to the Minnesota Supercomputer Center, a 250,000 square foot research and development facility for the Naval Systems Defense Group of FMC Corporation. Incubator space is also provided by Control Data Business Technology Center and the Muse Ten development. With 128-acres, it the potential for over \$100 million in private investment and the creation of 5,000-10,000 jobs.

#### *Events*

Minneapolis also hosts many events along its "Mississippi Mile." All year long there are festivities including river clean ups; history and nature walks; fireworks; concerts; international food fairs; sightseeing cruises, family fun days; and kids programs. The emphasis is getting people back to the river to appreciate its historic, natural and economic value to the city and its residents. There is a telephone hotline number to call which lists the scheduled events. The whole array of activities are sponsored and organized by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Riverplace (a private development), St. Anthony Main (a private development), Woman's Club of Minneapolis, and the Minneapolis Community Development Agency with others joining regularly.

## SUMMARY OF COMMON DENOMINATORS FROM SUCCESS STORIES ACROSS THE NATION

- 1) Commitment from local public officials in the form of long-term waterfront plans, cooperation with the private sector and the public, and a willingness to furnish municipal resources.
- 2) Public participation in the process of deciding what kinds of development or open space is appropriate and desired for the waterfront — including surveys, focus group meetings, neighborhood and community visioning and planning meetings.
- 3) Commitment from the local private sector — including a willingness to work with the public sector. This also involves developers who are interested in working on projects on the waterfront, and corporations willing to back the city and developers with financing.
- 4) An organization (in some cases, the redevelopment authority or a non-profit group or agency) that can coordinate activities, pursue investors and grants, rally public support, and publicize progress on the renewed waterfront.
- 5) Redevelopment and renewal projects on a project-by-project, incremental basis rather than as a whole development project.
- 6) Commitment from regional entities, such as regional planning agencies in support of local plans and technical assistance on planning, design, and funding.
- 7) Connection to educational institutions that may have the resources (student projects) for planning, design, and implementation of potential projects.
- 8) Involvement of interest groups such as arts councils, neighborhood groups, and others with potential investment of ideas or activities on the waterfront.
- 9) A market niche, such as, special events that are unique to the area, or water-based activities that draw people to the waterfront.
- 10) Some common mechanisms used for funding projects:
  - Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
  - Municipal Bonds
  - Private sector contributions
  - Redevelopment Authority funds
  - Citizen group fundraising
  - Creative fundraising (“buy-a-brick,” “Friends of...”)
  - Land and Water Conservation Fund
  - Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) Enhancements funds
  - State funds through environmental, economic and community development, and transportation agencies
  - Assistance from private organizations such as the Trust for Public Land
  - Federal funds through Housing and Urban Development and the Federal Highway Administration





# Appendix A

Memorandum of Agreement for  
Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway Committee



# MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

## FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONNECTICUT RIVERWALK & BIKEWAY COMMITTEE

by and among the Municipalities of Agawam, Chicopee, Longmeadow, Springfield and West Springfield,  
the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, and other municipalities or organizations  
which may approve this agreement.

This memorandum is agreed to by and among the Municipalities of Agawam, Chicopee, Longmeadow, Springfield and West Springfield (“the municipalities”), the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC), and other municipalities or organizations which may approve it, for the purpose of establishing a Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway Committee (“the Committee”) with a defined set of responsibilities, powers and procedures.

The function of the Committee is to plan for and oversee the design, construction and maintenance of a walking and bicycling trail along the Connecticut River connecting the participating communities (“the Riverwalk”).

Whereas, the municipalities and PVPC support the proposal for the creation of a regional bicycling and pedestrian pathway along the Connecticut River, recognizing such potential benefits as heightened public awareness and appreciation of the Connecticut River as a natural resource, enhanced recreational activities, and increased tourism and economic development;

Whereas, the municipalities and PVPC have been meeting monthly since February 1994 on an informal basis to work toward the creation of such a Riverwalk, and their efforts have resulted in, among other things, a \$240,000 grant under the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) for engineering and design of initial Riverwalk segments;

Whereas, the municipalities and PVPC recognize that decisions involved in executing this and future grants concerning the design, costs and maintenance of the Riverwalk will have an impact on each participating community;

Whereas, the municipalities and PVPC further recognize that the Riverwalk’s success will depend on qualities of the trail corridor that require mutual cooperation and effort, such as:

- continuity across public and private riverfront lands;
- consistency of design, construction and maintenance throughout the participating communities;
- safety and security for users along the entire route.



It is therefore resolved, that the municipalities of Agawam, Chicopee, Longmeadow, Springfield and West Springfield, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, and other municipalities or organizations which may approve this memorandum do hereby form a committee to be known as the Connecticut RiverWalk & Bikeway Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to:

- plan, and if duly authorized, oversee the design, construction and maintenance of a walking and bicycling trail along the Connecticut River (“Riverwalk”) in the five communities named; and to
- provide a mechanism where each community can participate in decisions concerning the Riverwalk that will affect them, as detailed in the provisions below.

It is further resolved, that it is the intent of the municipalities of Agawam, Chicopee, Longmeadow, Springfield and West Springfield to each own the section of Riverwalk within their boundaries or possess rights-of-way easements or other agreements providing control and public access, and to operate and maintain their section of the corridor according to a mutually agreed upon plan. This maintenance and security plan shall be developed as a result of Committee process.

## **I. Functions of the Connecticut RiverWalk & Bikeway Committee**

The Committee will engage in the full range of activities necessary for the development and operation of a riverfront bicycle and pedestrian corridor along the Connecticut River, including but not limited to:

1. Soliciting and allocating funding for design, construction, and maintenance and security of the Riverwalk;
2. Determining the Riverwalk route and the order in which segments are to be constructed;
3. Providing technical assistance to cities and towns in acquiring property, rights-of-way and/or easements in order to secure a continuous Riverwalk corridor;
4. Recruiting and hiring landscape architects, engineers, contractors and/or other professionals needed to design, build and maintain the Riverwalk;
5. Reviewing, and approving of, Riverwalk design, construction and maintenance documents;
6. Developing a strategy for approval by member municipalities to ensure the Riverwalk is maintained to a consistent, mutually agreed upon standard, and to provide for adequate security measures. *As noted above, a maintenance and security plan shall be approved by a majority Committee vote.*
7. Keeping municipalities informed of Riverwalk plans and soliciting assistance in the form of matching grants, in-kind services and the like;
8. Informing the public of Riverwalk plans and soliciting public support when necessary and/or appropriate;
9. Coordinating Riverwalk plans with relevant public agencies such as the Massachusetts Highway Department, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

*There is no expenditure of municipal funds required as part of this agreement. Any such future expenditure of funds must be approved separately by each municipality or organization. Any construction, operation, maintenance or security plan for the project shall be subject to approval by each participating municipality and organization, in accordance with Mass. General Laws Chapter 40, Section 4a.*

## II. Committee Structure & Operation

### A. Membership

The Committee shall have two categories of membership:

1. **The Full Voting Membership** category is limited to the signatories of this agreement — the five participating municipalities and PVPC.

To ensure adequate municipal representation, member communities will have three seats each on the Committee. These three seats will be filled by appointment of the Select Board or Mayor, which/who may accept nominations from the Planning Board, Department of Public Works, Conservation Commission or Recreation Commission.

Each municipality shall be considered one member of the Committee and accordingly have one vote, as described in II. B below, Method of Voting. PVPC will designate one person to the Committee's Full Voting Membership and have one vote.

Full, voting membership in the Committee may be expanded by admitting any abutting city or municipality by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Committee; provided, however, that such expansion shall only occur at the request and initiation of such abutting city or municipality and that such abutting city or municipality shall ascribe to this Memorandum of Agreement, which shall be contemporaneously amended to include it.

**Associate Membership:** By a majority vote, the Committee may invite any other person or organization to participate in its activities as an associate, non-voting member.

### B. Method of Voting

Each municipality shall be considered one member of the Committee and shall accordingly have one vote. Where the representatives of any municipality disagree with one another, they shall determine the vote of their municipality by a majority within that representation.

### C. Withdrawal from Membership

Any member municipality may withdraw from participation in the Committee upon *six* months written notice signed by the Board of Selectmen, Board of Aldermen or City Council with concurrence of the Mayor, such notice to be given only after approval of such withdrawals is given by a majority vote of town meeting or the Board of Aldermen or City Council with concurrence of the Mayor of the withdrawing municipality.

In the event a member community withdraws after its portion of the Riverwalk has been constructed in whole or in part, its withdrawal will not relieve that community from the responsibility of providing proper maintenance and security for that Riverwalk segment, based upon minimum standards established by the Committee prior to withdrawal.

#### **D. Rules of Procedure & Operation**

The Committee shall elect officers and adopt rules governing its decision-making process, quorum for meetings, frequency and location of meetings, establishment of subcommittees, address for purpose of correspondence and general operations. Adoption of these rules shall require an affirmative two-thirds vote.

#### **E. Committee Evaluation**

Six months after the execution of this agreement the signatories and/or other then-participating members of the Committee shall review and evaluate its performance and make recommendations concerning its future operations. After such initial evaluation, the Committee shall conduct similar evaluations once every 12 months.

### **III. Roles & Responsibilities**

#### **A. The Municipalities**

In addition to providing Committee members to participate in the planning and development of the Riverwalk, the municipalities will:

1. pursue the acquisition of property, rights-of-way or easements to the Riverwalk corridor as needed, but no municipality shall be required to purchase or take any such property by eminent domain;
2. seek local matching funds and/or in-kind services to qualify for ISTEA and other grant programs;
3. seek local permits and approvals needed for Riverwalk development; and
4. build support in their communities, particularly among municipal boards and departments, and businesses and residents along the Riverwalk corridor;
5. investigate funding sources for development and maintenance of the segment of Riverwalk in their community.

No municipality shall be required to contribute services or funds for the development and maintenance of portions of Riverwalk outside of its municipal boundaries.

#### **B. PVPC**

The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, *as empowered by Mass. General Laws Chapter 40B*, may:

1. develop proposals for, seek, receive and implement assistance and grants from state, federal and private sources, provided that the proposal for each shall be approved by an affirmative majority of the Committee;
2. receive money and support from any source by donation or appropriation, provided that such money is for the sole purpose of *implementing the project*;
3. establish a bank account, enter into contracts, and expend money, provided that all such contracts and expenditures are for the sole purpose of *implementing the project*;

PVPC will undertake these functions provided that sufficient funds are available to support them.



PVPC shall , when acting as agent for the committee as above described, comply with all applicable Federal, State and Local laws and regulations.

PVPC shall not be empowered to make binding decisions or commitments other than the contracts or expenditures listed above, unless specified by amendment to this agreement.

#### IV. Authorization/Effective Date

This Agreement has been authorized by vote of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and by votes of the Select Board, City Council or Board of Aldermen in each municipality if required by city charter. This Memorandum will become effective for participating signatories when it is signed by two or more signatories.

#### V. Amendments

This memorandum of Agreement may be amended at any time, if such amendment has been authorized by a vote of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and by votes of the Select Board, City Council or Board of Aldermen in each municipality if required by city charter.

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Mayor, Town of Agawam	Date
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Mayor, City of Chicopee	Date
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Chair, Town of Longmeadow Select Board	Date
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Mayor, City of Springfield	Date
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Chair, Town of West Springfield Select Board	Date
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Executive Director, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission	Date
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# Appendix B

Preliminary Design Graphics For  
Connecticut RiverWalk and Bikeway





## LONGMEADOW CONSERVATION LAND

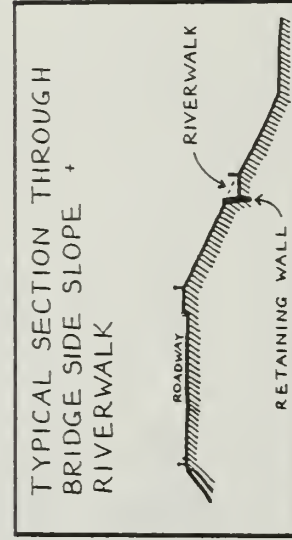
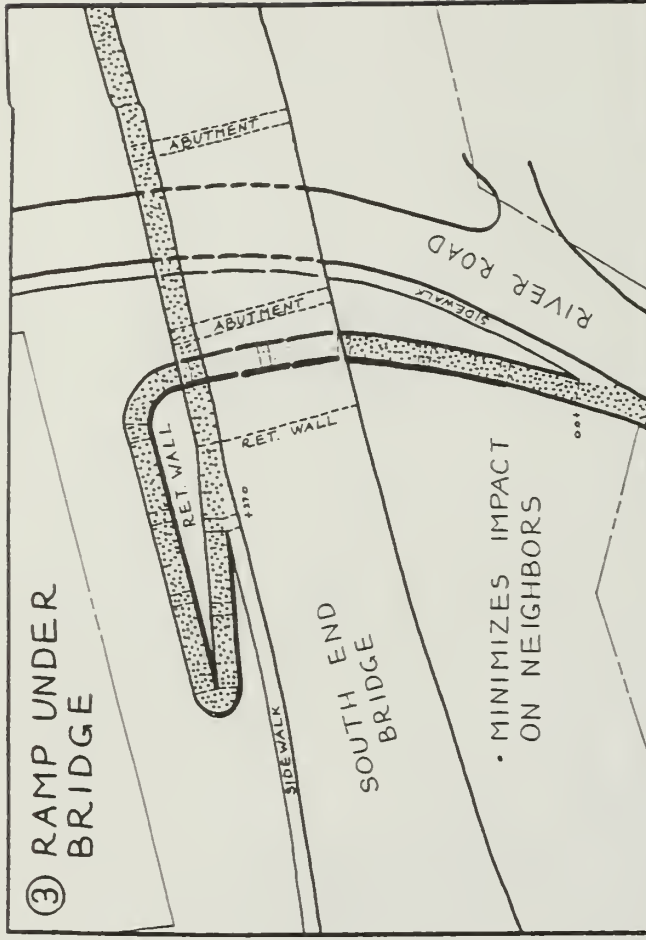
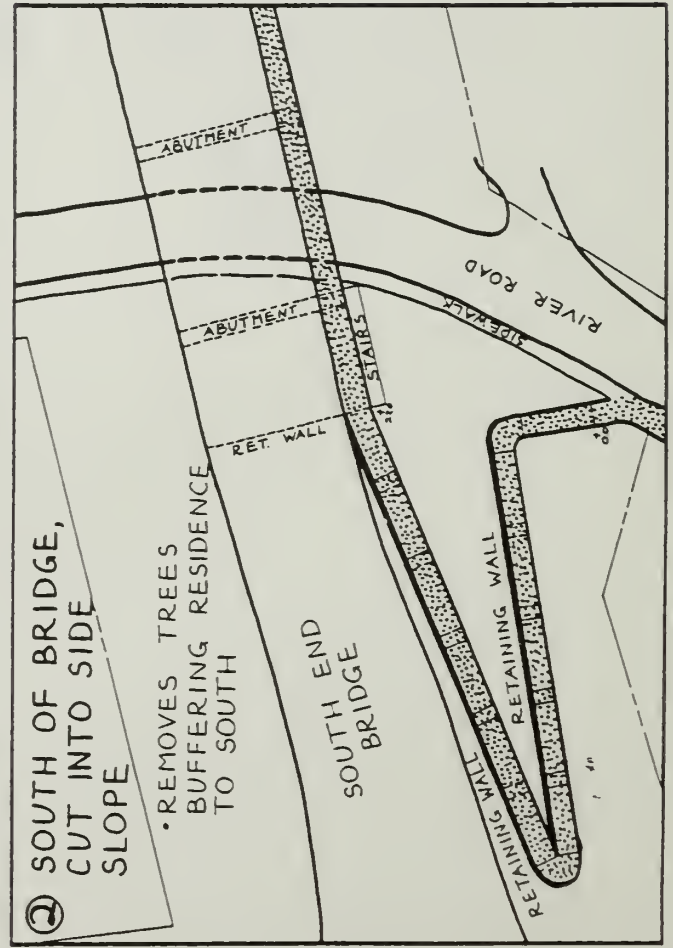
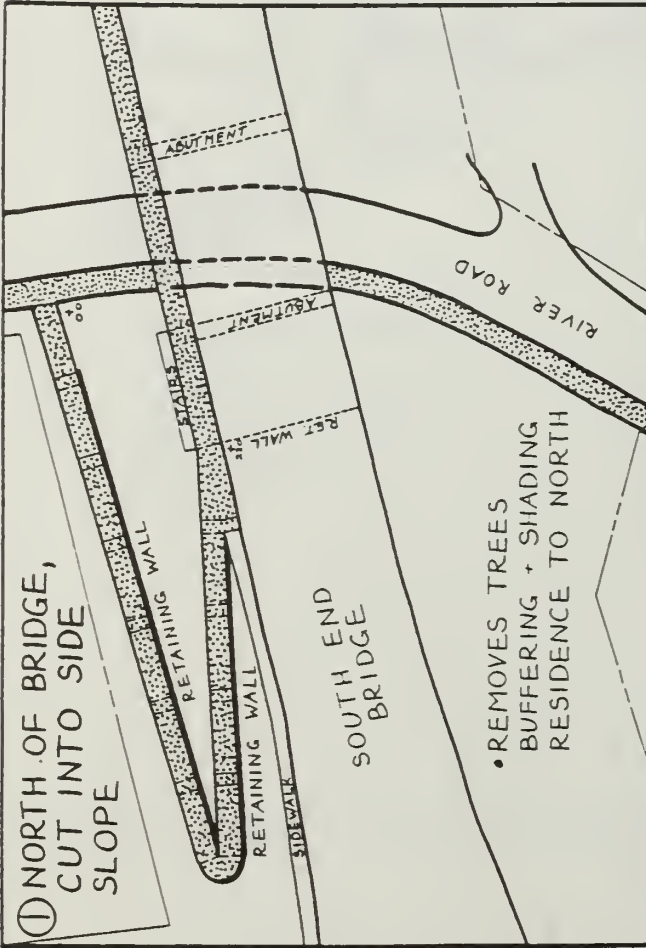
A new, 10'-wide, paved Riverwalk path follows an existing farm road along the field's edge and then curves to parallel the Connecticut River at the edge of the riverbank trees



## CONNECTICUT RIVERWALK & BIKEWAY

SPRINGFIELD, WEST SPRINGFIELD, AGAWAM, CHICOPET & LONGMEADOW  
PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION

Conway School of Landscape Design  
Freda Eisenberg and Lynn Harper  
June, 1994



NOTES:

- ALL RAMPS AT 8% SLOPE, WITH 5'-LONG LANDINGS EVERY 30'
- ELEVATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE. A TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY IS NECESSARY BEFORE FINAL ROUTE DESIGN

SOUTH END BRIDGE -  
AGAWAM

Bridge Ramp Alternatives

CONNECTICUT RIVERWALK  
& BIKEWAY

SPRINGFIELD, WEST SPRINGFIELD, AGAWAM, CHICOPPEE & LONGMEADOW

PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION

Conway School of Landscape Design  
Frederic Blumberg and Lynn Harper  
June, 1994







## RIVERWALK ROUTE: NORTH SECTION

## CONNECTICUT RIVERWALK & BIKEWAY

SPRINGFIELD, WEST SPRINGFIELD, AGAWAM, CHICOPEE & LONGMEADOW  
PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION

Base map compiled by Massachusetts Department of Public Works, 1975, with revisions by Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, 1988, and additional information by Freda Elenberg and Lynn Harper, Conway School of Landscape Design, 1994.

Conway School of Landscape Design  
Freda Elenberg and Lynn Harper  
June, 1994





## RIVERWALK ROUTE: SOUTH SECTION

## CONNECTICUT RIVERWALK & BIKEWAY

Base map compiled by Massachusetts Department of Public Works, 1973, with revisions by Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, 1989, and additional information by Freda Ehrenberg and Lynn Harper, Conway School of Landscape Design, 1994.

SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS, 1973; AGAWAM, 1989; & 1994; 1994

PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION

Conway School of Landscape Design  
Freda Ehrenberg and Lynn Harper  
June, 1994





## DIKE-WALK & RIVER ACCESS POINT

### Scene Description

The view depicted is from the top of the dike, which slopes steeply down on either side. Looking northeast from the area behind the Rivendale Shops in West Springfield, the dike bends away into the distance under Interstate 91.

Riverwalk access begins at a paved plaza off to the left in the middle distance, where two figures can be seen approaching the ramp. The ramp leads over a culvert and up to a soft surfaced trail along the dike top. This is the first tread of a dual tread trail system. Its narrow, 10 foot width combined with the steep side slopes of the dike make this trail suitable for pedestrians only.

## CONNECTICUT RIVERWALK & BIKEWAY

SPONSORED BY THE MAHARISHI AGAWAM CIRCUS & CIRCUSMEN

PIEDMONT VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION

Conway School of Landscape Design  
Freda Elmhurst and Lynn Harper  
June, 1994

Crossing the dike, the ramp continues toward the viewer off to the right where, beyond the field of view (behind the viewer), it descends into the floodplain to meet the second tread -- a hard surfaced bicycle trail running roughly parallel to the base of the dike. Along with woodland paths providing river access, the bicycle trail can be seen through the ramp railing. It is on level land 18 feet below the top of the dike.

Although site conditions will vary, the design shown may be readily adapted for other sections of dike.

# DIKE-WALK & RIVER ACCESS POINT RIVERDALE SHOPS WEST SPRINGFIELD, MA

## PRELIMINARY SCHEMATIC DESIGN

### DIKE WALK Multi-Use for Multi-Use

- top of dike reserved for parking
- 12 foot wide, paved trail at toe of dike for road bicycles, skaters and others (principal north) dips in and out of floodplain for interest and shade
- network of rough, paved and unpaved paths (footage trails)
- through floodplain forest for hikers and mountain bikers
- special sections of nature trails with obstacles for mountain bicyclists to attract them away from dike surface

### RIVER ACCESS Views and Spaces

- vegetation managed to open intermittent views from top of dike and dike toe
- picnic areas and fishing docks placed along shore line; access is provided from nature trail; views from principal road provides wide-spread views

### SITE ACCESS: Main Connection

- main plaza completed and modified for Riverwalk use
- area enhanced with plantings, benches, and bicycle racks
- informational signs providing information on:
  - where users can enter and exit the trail
  - attractions along in in the vicinity of the route

- enhance user interest in, and experience of, the corridor by providing historical and ecological background on the dike and floodplain
- provide parking area
- Riverdale Shops parking area outlined with bicycle lanes to connect Riverwalk with mall amenities

### SITE ACCESS: Getting in the River

- ramp to plus at entry phase, reverse ditch, the culvert, curves at 15% radius to accommodate 20 mph. All bicycle traffic with 5 foot level on side slopes of dikes at 5% maximum slope with 5 foot level landings for each 25 feet of rise meets ADA and AASHTO standards
- fill on the inside of ramps to be multiphased in regard to compensatory shape regulations. In the 100 year flood plain ramp is in the cut into side of dike

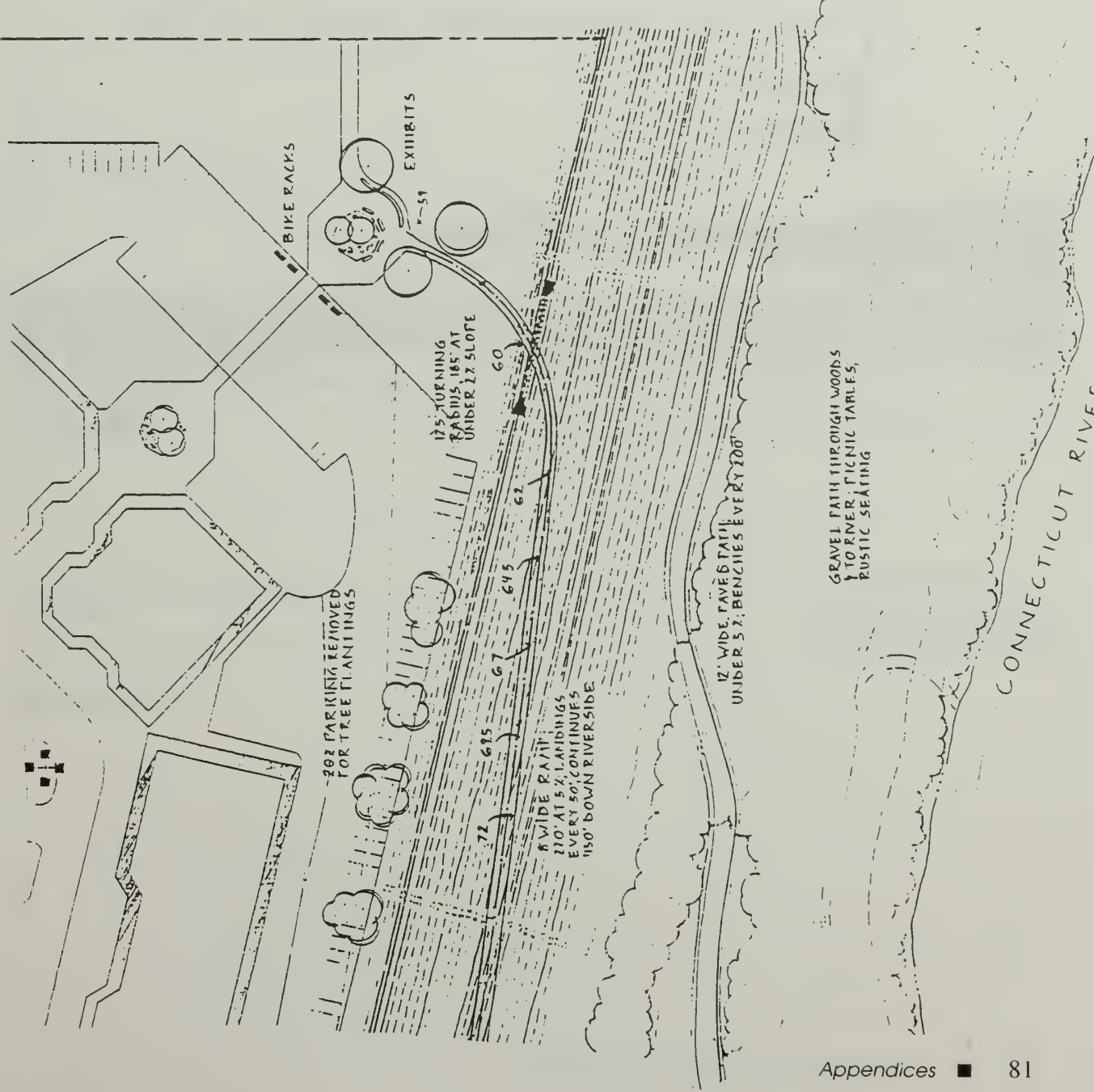


## CONNECTICUT RIVERWALK & BIKEWAY

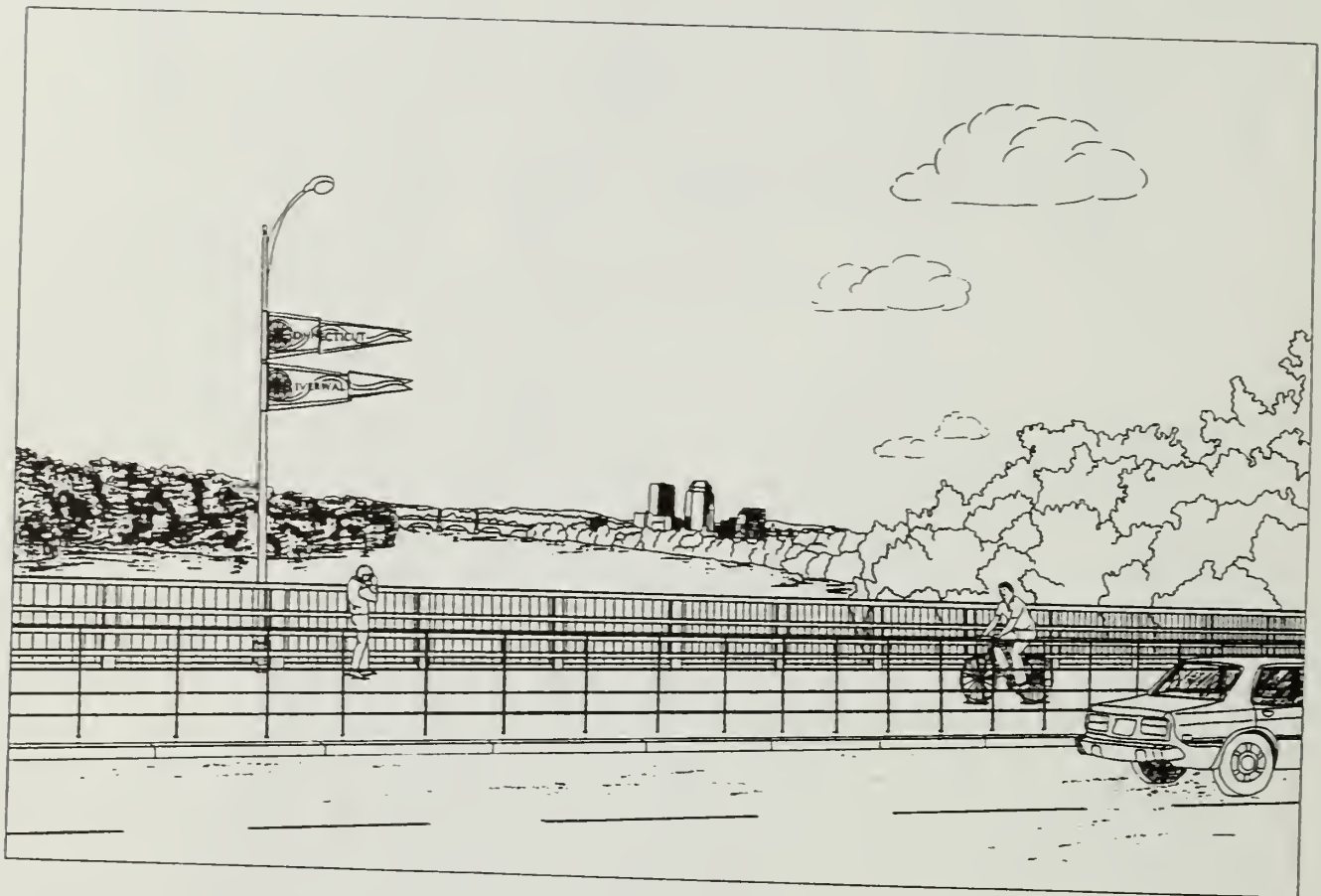
APPROXIMATE WEST-ORIENTED, AIRBORNE, CONCEPT, & PERSPECTIVE

UNIVERSITY VASTLY PLANNING COMMISSION

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June 1988







## SOUTH END BRIDGE

The 14'-wide Riverwalk on the north side of the bridge gives bicyclists and pedestrians a panoramic view of the Springfield skyline, the Memorial Bridge, the mouth of the Westfield River, and the sweep of the Connecticut River.

## CONNECTICUT RIVERWALK & BIKEWAY

SPRINGFIELD, WEST SPRINGFIELD, AGAWAM, CHICOPPEE & LONGMEADOW

PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION

Conway School of Landscape Design  
Freda Eisenberg and Lynn Harper  
June, 1994

# Appendix C

Legislation for Western Massachusetts Environmental Trust





# Legislation for Western Massachusetts Environmental Trust

*Draft- June 16, 1995*

## **AN ACT ESTABLISHING A WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST FUND**

### **SECTION 1.**

- (a) There shall be established and set up on the books of the commonwealth a separate fund known as the Western Massachusetts Environmental Trust Fund. It shall be the sole purpose of the Trust Fund to fund and coordinate projects to restore, protect and improve the quality of water in rivers in watersheds of the Bashbish, Chicopee, Connecticut, Deerfield, Farmington, French, Hoosic, Housatonic, Kinderhook, Millers, Quinebaug and Westfield Rivers. The expenditure of the two million dollars of principal appropriated to the trust by this section shall be made at the direction of the secretary of environmental affairs. All other monies for the Trust Funds shall be solicited, received and expended within the limits of and in the manner described in rules and procedures to be adopted by the board of trustees to be appointed by the secretary of environmental affairs. The board shall also develop criteria for project grants to be made to cities, towns, or regional planning agencies for projects consistent with the purposes of the Trust Fund.
- (b) Within thirty days of the establishment of the Trust Fund, the secretary of environmental affairs shall appoint a board of trustees. The secretary may also appoint a director to assist in administration of the Trust Fund. All expenditures from the Trust Fund shall be made at the direction of the secretary of environmental affairs, with the advice of the board; provided that expenditures of funds other than the two million dollars of principal appropriated by this section shall also require the approval of said board. The board shall consist of seven distinguished citizens who, by virtue of standing in the community and experience, are suited to advise the secretary on effecting the purposes of the Trust Funds. The board shall serve without compensation, and shall adopt operating rules and procedures for its organization and activities.
- (c) Notwithstanding the provisions of any general or special law to the contrary, revenue shall be credited to the fund in the following manner.
  - (i) The sum of two million dollars is hereby made available from the General Funds for the purposes of the fund; provided that said funds shall remain available until July thirty-first, nineteen hundred and ninety-nine; provided further that, from time to time, the secretary of environmental affairs

shall, as she or he deems appropriate, notify the state treasurer, the state comptroller, the commissioner of administration, and the house and senate committees on ways and means that funds are required for the purposes listed in subsection (a). Upon receipt of said notification, the comptroller shall, without delay, transfer to the fund without further appropriation the amounts requested: provided that the cumulative total of all such transfers may not exceed two million dollars authorized by this paragraph; and provided further, that the amounts transferred pursuant to this paragraph shall be held separately from amounts received pursuant to paragraphs (ii), (iii), and (iv);

- (ii) quarterly, on or about September thirtieth, and treasurer shall certify to the comptroller an amount of interest to be credited to the fund, calculated on the basis of the daily balance remaining in the General Fund of the two million dollar principal appropriated in the preceding paragraph or clause (i), and the comptroller shall quarterly transfer said amount of interest to the fund without further appropriation; provided that the amounts credited under this clause shall be in addition to amounts credited in clause (i), and shall not be subject to the two million dollar limitation imposed in clause (i);
  - (iii) the trust funds shall retain all interest earned on sums deposited in the fund;
  - (iv) in addition, the trust funds may receive such other funds as may be appropriated from time to time, as well as gifts and grants from other sources, or fines and penalties not designated by law for other specific purposes, to be used for the purposes of the trust.
- (d) The state comptroller shall charge the amounts transferred under clauses (i) and (ii) of subsection (c) to the General Fund of the commonwealth, and said charges shall be reflected in annual financial reports in accordance with section twelve of chapter seven A of the General Laws.
- (e) The registrar of motor vehicles and the secretary of environmental affairs shall develop a distinctive Western Massachusetts Environmental Trust Fund registration and plate for private passenger motor vehicles on the theme of enhancing water quality in western Massachusetts rivers; provided that in addition to regular registration fee, and additional amount of not less than thirty-five dollars shall be paid; a portion of the fee for the purposes of offsetting the direct expenses of issuing special plates shall be deposited in a registry retained revenue account; provided further, that the balance of said fee shall be deposited in the Western Massachusetts Environmental Trust Fund, as established pursuant to this act; and provided further that the plate shall be available no later than six months following the passage of this act.

# Appendix D

Model Zoning Bylaw for  
Connecticut Riverfront Development District





# Model Zoning Bylaw

## FOR CONNECTICUT RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

### **Connecticut Riverfront Development Incentive Overlay District**

#### **Prepared by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission for Town of South Hadley**

The Connecticut Riverfront Development Incentive Overlay District zoning bylaw was developed for South Hadley, with assistance from the South Hadley Riverfront Advisory Committee, to promote appropriate economic development along developed areas of the Connecticut River. Other communities along the river could adapt this bylaw for their use.

The South Hadley Zoning Bylaw would be amended by adding the following new section to Section 7, Supplemental District Regulations.

#### **(P) Connecticut Riverfront Development Incentive Overlay District**

##### **1. Purpose**

To create a distinctive and attractive riverfront by providing incentives for economic and recreational development which is compatible with and enhances the Connecticut River and provides public access to and along the river.

##### **2. Scope of Authority**

The Connecticut Riverfront Development Incentive Overlay District is an overlay district and shall be superimposed on the other districts established by the bylaw. All regulations of the Town of South Hadley Zoning Bylaw applicable to such underlying districts shall remain in effect, except that where the Connecticut Riverfront Development Incentive District imposes additional regulations, such regulations shall prevail.

##### **3. District Delineation**

The Connecticut Riverfront Development Incentive Overlay District shall include the areas shown on the map entitled "South Hadley Connecticut Riverfront Development Incentive Overlay District."

#### 4. Standards for Special Permits

In addition to Special Permit standards described in Section 9(C) the following special permit standards shall apply in the Connecticut Riverfront Development Incentive Overlay District.

- a. The applicant shall dedicate meaningful permanent public access to and along the dry shore of the Connecticut River for a minimum distance of twenty-five feet inland from the mean high water mark. Meaningful permanent public access is defined as safe and unobstructed access to and along the dry, non-submerged riverfront for all members of the public. Such access shall be formalized through granting of a permanent easement or fee title to the Town of South Hadley, or its assignee. To protect the rights of the property owner access may be regulated by reasonable conditions set forth in a Management Plan submitted by the applicant and approved by the SPGA at the time of the special permit application. The applicant is not required to provide developed public access except for as noted in Section P (5).

#### 5. Development Incentives and Public Benefits

The SPGA may allow, by special permit application, development incentives to promote public recreational opportunities along the Connecticut River. To qualify for these development incentives, the development must provide either public amenities or benefits or funds to a South Hadley Riverfront Trust Fund.

- a. Public amenities or benefits warranting development incentives include: pedestrian walkways and street furniture; public art; fountains or similar water works; children's play areas and play equipment; educational displays or features; esplanades, plaza, pocket parks, or other public open spaces; public access to the water; boating or fishing areas; or developed public access along the Connecticut River. These public benefits or features must be closely associated with the impact of the development and related to adjacent properties and integrated into other public lands or amenities.
- b. A voluntary contribution of funds donated to the South Hadley Riverfront Trust Fund may also warrant development incentives. This contribution shall only be used for the development and maintenance of public recreational opportunities along the Connecticut River or to improve water quality of the Connecticut River.
- c. The SPGA shall make the decision to accept or reject proposed public amenities or features or determine the adequacy of the voluntary contribution and shall have the authority to impose additional conditions in the best interests of the Town of South Hadley.
- d. The following dimensional regulations schedule shall apply if the public benefits mentioned in P 5 a. or P 5 b. are acceptable to the SPGA:

Minimum lot size	10,000 square feet
Minimum frontage	100 feet
Maximum lot coverage	50%
Maximum height (feet/stories)	80/6

Dimensional requirements of the underlying districts apply for setbacks.

- e. In determining the amount of density incentive increase to grant, the Planning Board shall consider: the number, extent and combination of incentives; the need for such features by the Town of South Hadley; the degree of compatibility with the neighborhood in which they are proposed; the quality of design of the proposed development; and the value of the proposed public benefit feature versus the value of the development incentive. In no instance shall the dimensional regulations exceed those set forth in P 5 d. No incentive density increase shall be granted for the construction of any improvement otherwise required by law.

#### 6. Special Permit Granting Authority

The Planning Board shall be the Special Permit Granting Authority for the Connecticut Riverfront Development Incentive Overlay District.

#### 7. Procedures and Requirements

Applications for Special Permits within the Connecticut Riverfront Development Incentive Overlay District shall follow the procedures and requirements set forth in Section 9 of this zoning bylaw.





# Appendix E

## News Coverage of Connecticut Riverfront Projects



# Union News.

1860 Main Street, Springfield, Mass. 01101

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## RIVER PATH LEADS TO ENJOYMENT

# Residents, visitors will enjoy beltway

**W**hen this nation was settled by European colonists, rivers such as the Connecticut played an important part in trade and travel. That is why important communities were nearly always located along waterways.

But as the decades and centuries passed, many communities turned their backs on their rivers, considering them obstacles to vehicular traffic, and useful only to carry away sewage.

One of the fringe benefits of the environmental movement of more recent decades is the growing awareness of how attractive development of riverfront property can enhance communities.

All across the nation, cities and towns are rediscovering the waterways that played such an important part in their development. From Detroit's convention center and park on the waterfront in Michigan to San Antonio's popular Riverwalk in Texas, a variety of successful riverfront projects has been developed — all incorporating attractive public open spaces.

Springfield began moving in that direc-

tion some years ago, with the creation of Riverfront Park.

Now plans call for linking that park, and the nearby Basketball Hall of Fame, with Longmeadow to the south and Chicopee to the north, with a riverside walk and bike path.

Across the river, a similar greenbelt would connect Agawam and West Springfield.

Mayors of Springfield, Agawam and Chicopee have signed an agreement which calls for design to begin this summer on the river path. The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, the lead agency for the project, already has applied to the state Highway Department for \$3 million in construction and engineering funds.

In all, a 13-mile stretch of riverfront will become part of the linear park, providing pedestrians and bicycle riders with a pleasant and safe area to travel and enjoy the riverfront view.

The river path undoubtedly will lead more people to enjoy the beauties of the Connecticut River shoreline.



# Mayors ink river path agreement

Design will begin this summer on a 13-mile bike and pedestrian path in three communities along the Connecticut River.

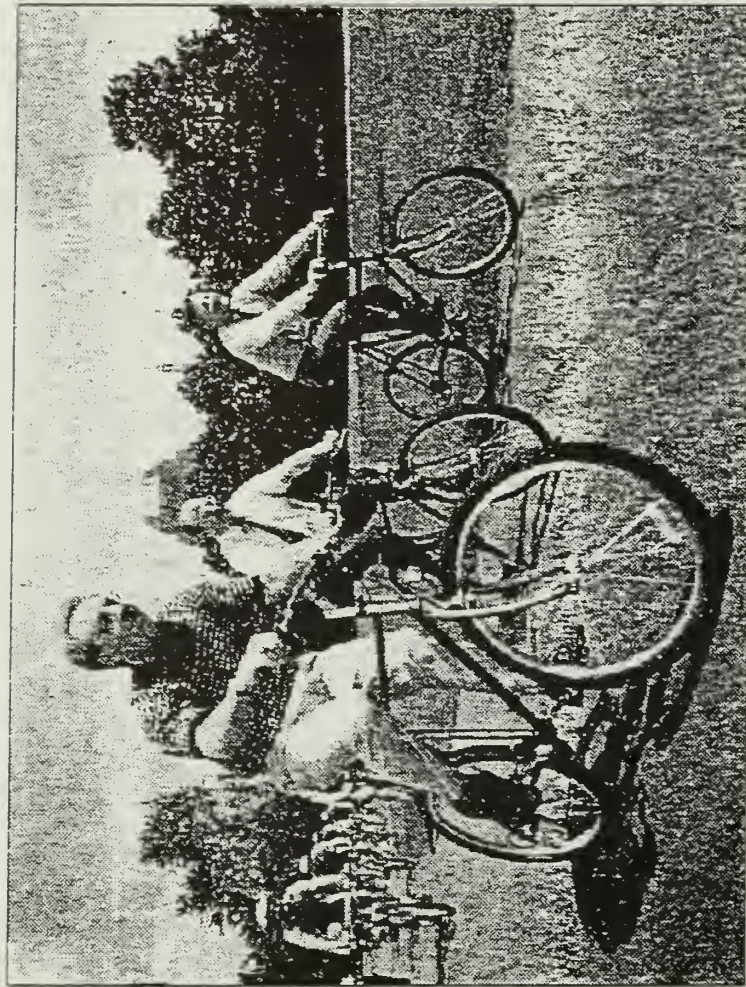
By RHONDA SWAN  
JOHNSON

Staff writer

**SPRINGFIELD** — The mayors of Springfield, Agawam and Chicopee bicycled their way to Riverfront Park with members of the Cyclonaut Racing and Touring Club yesterday, where they signed an agreement to create a bike path along the banks of the Connecticut River.

The proposed 13-mile riverwalk would be designed as a linear park along both sides of the Connecticut River, connecting Agawam, Chicopee, Springfield and eventually West Springfield and Longmeadow. It would link the Basketball Hall of Fame to Riverfront Park and include a promenade and landscaped greenbelt.

Springfield Mayor Robert T. Markel said the city will contrib-



Leading the Cyclonauts bicycle riding group into Riverfront Park yesterday are, from left, Agawam Mayor Christopher Johnson, Chicopee Mayor Joseph Chessey and Springfield Mayor Robert T. Markel.

Staff photo by JOHN SUCHOCKI

ute \$21,000 in community development funds toward the project next month.

"I think it's money well spent," Markel said. "I'm very much in favor of this project. You're going to see a transformation of the riverfront over the next three to five years."

The Connecticut RiverWalk Task Force has received a \$240,000 federal grant covering conceptual design of the route, site design and engineering plans for sections in Agawam in Springfield.

The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission is the lead agency on the project.

Christopher Curtis, manager of

environment and land use at PVPC, said an engineering and design consultant will be selected in the next few weeks.

The commission has applied to the Massachusetts Highway Department for a \$3 million grant to construct the 5.8-mile segment in Agawam and Springfield and to engineer the 4.5-mile segment in Chicopee, he added.

Curtis said the bicycle and pedestrian path will attract restaurants and boost tourism in the riverfront area.

"We think it will bring a whole series of benefits to the city and the region as a whole," Curtis said. "It will improve access to the largest river in New Eng-

land."

Chicopee Mayor Joseph Chessey said the city has been considering the idea of a bike path for a long time.

"I think this is really ideal for people to keep physically fit and takes the best advantage of our riverfront property," Chessey said.

Michael Norton of the Cyclonauts Racers, a group of about 100 bicyclists ranging from 10 to 65, said he is glad the club members will have a safe place to ride.

"This is going to help our club a lot," Norton said. "We'll have a place we can ride without being run over by a bunch of vehicles."

# Happy Trails

*A bike path to join Springfield with the Upper Valley is in the works*

By Stephanie Kraft

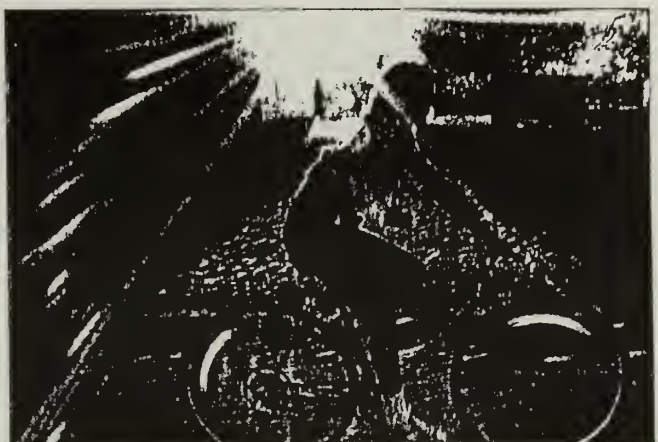
**"**I have my mind on the hike path today," the mother of two restless children said on a bright Sunday earlier this month. "We're all happy when we get out there."

The 2-year-old Norwottuck Rail Trail from Amherst to Northampton, with its superb view of the Connecticut River as you cross the old railroad bridge between Hadley and Northampton, has been popular even beyond the dreams of the Department of Environmental Management workers who designed it.

Now Valley planners are working to build what Tim Brennan, head of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, calls "a necklace of green space" that will eventually link Hampden County to the Norwottuck Rail Trail. Officially its name is the Connecticut River Walk. The first phase would be built in Springfield and Agawam.

"The idea is a combined bikeway-pedestrian facility that would connect many communities in the lower Valley that straddle the river," Brennan said. "We've started in with the urban core, where we have hundreds of thousands of people within a five-mile radius. The idea is to have this bikeway-walkway on the banks of the Connecticut as a draw for people to come back to the river that was the reason the region was created in the first place."

This week is the deadline for requests for proposals from design engineering firms for the Springfield-Agawam phase of the project. The project would be financed with federal transportation enhancement money, a different fund than the



TOBEY PHOTO

The 2-year-old Norwottuck Trail has been popular beyond the dreams of the Department of Environmental Management workers who designed it.

highway appropriations that go for road and bridge repair. Last fall The PVCP got a \$240,000 grant to pay for engineering design for the first segment. "A year from now we'll have the design plans and we can apply for money to start construction of phase one," Brennan said.

Talks have already begun with communities that will be involved in

**The bikeway could be a great enhancement to Springfield's North End, which has few recreational facilities.**

the second segment of the walk, to be built in Chicopee. Proposals for money for engineering design on that second phase have already been submitted to the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction and the Massachusetts Highway Department, Brennan said.

Unlike highway construction, projects like bike paths can't be sold to the public as necessities in a way that makes outright land takings possible. They require more diplomacy than, for example, the building of major highways. "A lot of the land in Springfield and Agawam is not public land. It's in private ownership, and we have gone to individual owners or corporations one by one," Brennan said. "To their credit, everyone has said, This is a good idea, we'll find a way to participate even if it means giving an easement across our land."

Peter Picknelly, owner of Peter Pan Bus Lines, Springfield attorney Anthony Ravosa, and the Springfield Newspapers are among the landowners who have promised to cooperate on the River Walk project, Brennan said. The bikeway could be a great enhancement to Springfield's North End, which has few recreational facilities.

The Norwottuck Rail Trail was a long time coming, between the years it took DEM staffers to get the funding and the time they had to spend alternately kissing the hands and twisting the arms of residents of Hadley, through which lay the longest right of way. Brennan, who lives in Hadley, noticed on his way home after work not long ago that the parking lot at the Northampton end of the hike path was crammed to overflowing.

"It was packed with people on a week night, and it startled me," he said. "It's one of the Valley's grand successes. We just hope that the next phase won't take 20 years like the other one."









Prepared By  
**Pioneer Valley Planning Commission**

**June 1995**